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LECTURES ON PALESTINE.—No. 8.

SAMARIA.

ON a beautiful evening of March, 1854, at set of sun, we climbed the sacred mountain of the Samaritans, which stands in the local centre of the land of Israel, to enjoy the last delight of a day crowded with the finest excitements. Early in the morning, we had rode over the mountain to Bethel, — the spot where weary Jacob saw in his dream the way to heaven, and set the anointed stone in testimony of the presence of Jehovah, — where Samuel went from year to year in his circuit to judge Israel, — where the old prophet took into his house the man of God from Judah, who came to prophesy against the idol that King Jeroboam had established there; and we had tried to choose, among the fragments of that ruined village, which was the stone of the patriarch's pillow, and which the blocks of the profane monarch's altar. We had passed the site of Shiloh, keeping still its ancient name in the poor Arab village, — of Shiloh, the first sacred city of the restored children of Jacob, where the tabernacle was fixed, the wandering ark found rest, the feast of the Lord was kept, and the daughters of the people came out to dance in dances, — the city of the judges and the prophets, where Eli ministered in his age, and Samuel in his youth, — cursed at last as fatally for the wickedness, as it was blessed at

first by the piety, of the people. We had rested at noonday in that charming valley, by the side of that khan and fountain, where travellers from Ephraim into Judah for ages were wont to halt, which recalls yet by its name the Lebonah of the judges. We had seen grain almost white to the harvest on those very broad fields where Jesus bade his disciples look around and see it; and where marauding Bedouins, robbing of their fruits the industrious husbandmen, still illustrate the word, — "Other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors." We had paused at the well of Jacob, to remember our Saviour's interview with the woman, to prove, by experiment that the "well is deep," and to regret that we had "nothing to draw with," that we, too, might drink refreshing water from the fountain of a hostile race. We had looked into the doorway of that small white dome which covers the grave, as Mahometans and Christians believe, of the favorite son to whom Jacob gave all this parcel of ground. We had watched, riding up the narrowing valley, if the slopes of Ebal, the mount of cursing, and Gerizim, the mount of blessing, might symbolize still, by their contrasted features, their ancient Scripture-fame; if the barren rock might not rise over against the fruitful vine, and desolate tombs stand opposite to cheerful cottages. We had passed through the long streets of Nablous, where a jealous and fanatic tribe still hate intrusive Christians, as the Samaritans of old hated the Jews who ventured to come to Sychar. We had seen the quarter where the remnant of this Samaritan race still keep their synagogue, and show the parchment relic of the book of their fathers' devotion. And, fitly to end a day so full of varied and stirring associations, we ascended, in its last hour, the mountain where the fathers of the Samaritans worshipped, to survey from its height the goodly hills of Ephraim, and the famous cities of Ahab and Herod.

Bold and striking rose there before us, shutting in all the northern prospect, the frowning summit of Mount Ebal. The sepulchres at its base, the crags along its side, and its barren and utterly forlorn aspect, seem to justify that reading of the Samaritan Pentateuch which takes the altar from Ebal, and sets it upon Gerizim. Most of the surface of Gerizim, indeed, is not more fertile than that of its rival. But above the town, where the valley is narrowest, there is a broad strip of green, in which vines and fig-trees and olive-trees grow in terraces, and fulfil the

promise of fertility to the "mount of blessing." These cease as you approach the mountain-top; and you find, on the broad plain which makes the summit, the signs rather of ancient power than of present fruitfulness. The groves are gone; but the rocks here are very sacred: some are part of the altar which was first built upon the mountain, and are called the "stones of covenant," which were brought at first across the Jordan by the tribes of Israel, and which will remain there until Messiah comes. Others are portions of the Temple; to Samaritan eyes, as sacred as the Caaba of Mecca to Moslems, or the Sepulchre to Christians. Others are fragments of the Castle, and still remain in the symmetric order and strength of fortress-walls. Here a double row of stones marks the place where the remnant of the people still keep their passover, and sacrifice their seven memorial lambs. On this summit they fix the spot where Abraham offered Isaac upon the altar, and began that series of sacrifices which has never ceased. The ashes there, which remain from the last burnt-offering, would tell the story of the Jewish feast-days without any guide's veracious assertions. Not only on the passover, but on their day of atonement, on their pentecost, and on their feast of tabernacles, do the Samaritans come up; bringing with them, on this last day, branches for tents, in which they pass the night upon the mountain.

At the foot of Gerizim, and nearly filling the space between the two mountains, is the city of Nablous. The name of this city is but slightly altered from Neapolis, — the name which it bore in the day of Vespasian. In the Scripture-narratives it is called Shechem, Sichem, and Sychar. Its beginning goes back to the earliest historical ages. The patriarchs all knew it, and dwelt in or near it. It became, after the return of the tribes, a city of refuge, and the portion of the Levites. Here the aged Joshua summoned the people together to hear his parting testimony, rehearsed before them the distinguished favors which God had vouchsafed to him, renewed solemnly the covenant of obedience, and set up the stone of remembrance under an oak by the sanctuary. Here Abimelech conspired with his brethren, and destroyed the city, which, hearkening to the voice of God, would not share his treachery. Here, after the death of Solomon, Rehoboam came to receive the homage of the tribes, and returned to their complaint that insolent answer which divided his kingdom,

and gave a rival prince to Israel. To this city the Assyrian king sent those men from the East who borrowed the worship of the captive Hebrews, mingling it with their own idolatry, and became the ancestors of the Samaritans. Ages after, we find this the capital of an alien people, whose name was a by-word among the faithful Jews, whose profession of lawful descent from Abraham was scornfully rejected, and whose cities were to be avoided even by the missionaries of the gospel. It was reckoned a misfortune that the pilgrim from Galilee must "needs go through Samaria." Yet in this hated city there were candid minds and willing hearts. They came out to hear at the call of the woman; many believed as they listened to the word; and the faith of Samaria shamed the indifference of Galilee. The two days which Jesus abode in Shechem were abundant in blessing; and, when he departed, numbers could say, "We know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

The modern city is one of the largest in Palestine; yet it is far less extended than the ancient must have been. Its length is somewhat less than a mile; its breadth, about one-third as great as its length. Several long and narrow streets run through it from east to west, with massive gates at either extremity. These streets in the Spring are rivers of water, which discharge themselves, in either direction, toward the Jordan and toward the sea. Of the ten thousand inhabitants, the greater portion are Moslems, celebrated above all others in Syria for their fanatical hatred to Christians of every sect. The few Greeks and Catholics there live in constant fear, expecting that massacre will follow the first outbreak. They are ready, with alarming stories of the savage fury of the infidels, to annoy travellers who pass that way, and so increase the already redundant extortion. This hostility to Christians is traditional in Nablous. It was shown in the early Christian ages by the attacks of the Samaritans; later, in the wars of the crusades; and, in the last century, it was so bold and insolent that the pilgrims dared not follow through this city their proper route to Jerusalem. Even now, few unarmed men dare to pass that way; and the dragomen of travellers dread the neighborhood, and caution their friends against venturing too far from the encampment. The aspect of the people is lowering and suspicious. As you salute them in the streets, they turn haugh-

tilly away, disdaining to answer. Even the Christian interest of the region, and the curious sect whose remnant still survive there, will not keep a traveller long with so inhospitable a people.

The Samaritans are gradually dwindling away, and will probably, before the close of this century, be nearly or quite extinct, even in their sacred city. Their whole people are but little more than a hundred; and few of these are children. They have no enterprise, and but little influence. Their charge is merely the religious keeping of their synagogue and their manuscripts. Their exclusiveness and closeness in the observance of prescribed rites are equalled only by their profound ignorance of all other parts of the world and all other people. Toward the Jews they cherish the same feeling which the woman expressed to our Saviour. They accuse these enemies of mutilating the sacred record, of lapsing into idolatry, of forsaking their native land, and restrict all intercourse with them to the bare necessities of trade. The priests find congenial employment in copying the manuscripts, and fulfilling the elaborate duties of the synagogue. This low vaulted room, and the houses which surround it, contain all their curiosities. Once they were privileged to exhibit the tombs of distinguished priests of the house of Aaron; but now of these they have lost the remembrance. The time cannot be far distant when the manuscripts which they have kept for so many ages will pass into the hands either of Christian travellers, who may secure them to the libraries of the West, or of their Jewish enemies, who will make haste to destroy such impious treasures.

The neighborhood of Shechem is remarkable for the fertility of its plains, the abundance of its fountains, and the comparative excellence of its roads, which are here something more than the rugged bridle-paths which bear the name of "roads" in Judea. These roads do not, indeed, reach the width or the smoothness required by the Levitical law for the ways to the city of refuge; nor are such convenient signboards placed at the crossings as helped once to the flying criminal to find his retreat. The bridges, however, in several places, remain; and timid Americans, flying from the armed Bedouins who cluster around Jacob's well, need find no obstruction on their gallop to the city. In some other respects, the rules of the city of refuge are reversed. The supply of weapons now is large, and the superfluity of provisions

now is small. Nablous has a bad fame, both for frequent famines, and more frequent murders; and many dwell there who are as afraid to venture beyond the walls as was the Hebrew fugitive, dreading always the avenger of blood.

One of the richest valleys in Palestine is that which extends for some miles north-westward toward the ancient capital of Herod's Samaritan kingdom. The road here is narrower and rougher than on the eastern side of the town; but it is enlivened by the most varied and picturesque landscapes. Numerous villages are passed, — some buried in the foliage of olive-groves; some fastened to the steep mountain-side; some finishing the point of a solitary peak; some in the centre of green meadows, at the bottom of deep glens. Here, high up on a crag, are the gray ruins of a Saracenic castle. There, spanning a brawling stream, are the pointed arches of an ancient aqueduct, to remind you of the valley of Gihon and the Roman Campagna. Now the great top of Ebal casts its huge shadow over the winding path; and now, through some cleft in the hills, the snowy peak of Hermon gleams white in the northern sky. A couple of hours bring you to the ruins of Sebaste, more extensive and perfect than those of any ancient Jewish city, — far surpassing those of Jerusalem. They reach for more than a mile along the sides of an isolated mountain, and testify by their vastness to the recorded splendors of that parasite Jewish king who was content to reign as a dependant on the Roman Cæsar.

The city originally bore the name Samaria, given afterward to the province, which it derived from the owner of the hill, Shemer, of whom Omri, King of Israel, purchased it for his capital. It was chosen, no doubt, from the strength and the beauty of its natural position, its easy access from all directions, and the fertility of the region around it. It became at once rich and powerful, and, in the reign of Ahab, was the centre of the wealth and the idolatrous worship of all the land. Here was the "altar of Baal, reared in the house of Baal." Here were the messengers of Benhadad, King of Syria, received by Ahab and his elders, and intrusted with that proud answer, "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off." Here, in an open space by the gate, sat the King of Israel, and Jehosaphat, King of Judah, each on his throne, in their royal robes, to hear what the prophet should prophesy concerning the battle at

Ramoth Gilead; and here the son of Imlah unveiled before them the terrible impending disaster, — a monarch fallen, and all Israel scattered on the hills as sheep that have not a shepherd. Here, in the pool, where at this day women come to cleanse their garments, the empty chariot was washed from its defilement, and dogs licked up the blood of the idolatrous king. Here, in the same gateway, which is still a market-place in the morning, and the haunt of beggars at the ninth hour of the day, was the sudden change from famine to plenty made manifest, the promise of Elisha fulfilled; and the leprous men, waiting there to die, could buy a measure of fine flour for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel. Here the same prophet taught to the king the laws of hospitality and compassion, — to deal kindly with his broken captives, and not destroy them. Again and again the sure retributions of Jehovah upon the proud and wayward and wicked city were foretold, — her captivity, her desolation, the woe to them that trust in her mountain; and, long after the Assyrians had carried away the people of the plain, the sorrows predicted to the capital were felt in their keenness. The curse of Baal's altar remained there, and the returning tribes changed to Sichein their preference. Samaria became the home of aliens; and, when Herod received it, it came as a present from his master Augustus.

Then the city, which was levelled with the ground in the wars of the preceding century, rose again in greater magnificence. Its walls, huge fragments of which still remain, were laid massive and broad as the walls of Solomon's Temple. In the sacred square was reared a vast basilica, where the divine Augustus was honored by the rites of Hebrew worship. Its extraordinary proportions are seen in the long colonnades which reach along the hill-side as far as the eye can see, — many of the columns prostrate, and half hidden by the earth and foliage; but many of them standing as firm in their regular order as when they bore the cornice of the great temple. Three thousand feet long this colonnade must once have been.

Other ruins, almost as grand as this colonnade, are seen on the north side of the hill. The ploughmen there are diverted from their forward way by the shafts and capitals which lie embedded in the soil, and may mark the boundaries of their ground by metes and pillars, which now they have no strength to overthrow.

At the entrance to the ancient city, not far from the place where the kings probably waited for the prophet's word, are the smooth, level threshing-floors, where the feet of oxen still tread out the grain as they have trodden it there for thousands of years. The process is not quite cleanly: we may believe that it would require an army as large as the Syrian king's to carry off "by handfuls" the dust which daily collects on that floor.

In the days of the Saviour, the name of the city was Sebaste, a Greek translation of the name Augusta. It was strongly garrisoned, and was a favorite residence of Antipas, the elder son of Herod, whose murder of John the Baptist would have secured for him infamy, without his mockery of Jesus or his Sadducee scepticism. The Catholic tradition fixes this city as the place of the Baptist's burial, and even of his death. The testimony of the Jew Josephus is of no avail; and Moslems, as well as Christians, devoutly believe that here the whole tragedy — the dance, the promise, and the beheading — was performed. The curiosity which they show is the Church of St. John, the first object which one meets after climbing the hill. It is a beautiful and very perfect ruin, with mixed architecture, — pointed arches, Corinthian capitals, long slender windows, Gothic buttresses, a court-yard, a colonnade, and an abundance of mutilated crosses sculptured on marble tablets. A small dome within the church covers the deep grotto, which is assigned as the place of the Baptist's burial. It belongs now to the Moslems; and the fine structure which the knights of St. John claim to have founded is a mosque, in which there are daily prayers toward Mecca. Christianity is now nearly expelled from the borders of Sebaste. The small Greek chapel on the hill is decaying, and only a few monks remain to sustain its services. The bishop dwells obscurely at Jerusalem, and has now only an empty title. There are no Catholic Christians on the mountain.

There are other towns, which we saw among the mountains of Samaria, of which we might fitly speak: Burka, where the welcome of the traveller is a shower of stones, hurled by the hands of the children, who are taught from infancy to curse the Giaour; Jeba, with its ruined tower, recalling by its name the Gibeah of Ephraim, where the men are still children of Belial, and where, even from the old man returning from his field, you may fail of that entertainment which the wayfaring Levite found;

Tubaz, where there are women, malicious still, to cast upon the stranger, who shall wait at the doors of their houses, a stone as fatal as that which broke there the head of the traitor Abimelech; Salem, on the eastern hill beyond the well of Jacob, where the patriarch pitched his tent when he surveyed the land and prepared to purchase it. All these towns deserve mention; and many villages more there are which doubtless stand on the place of some Hebrew cities, though now we are unable to trace the connection. No part of Palestine is better tilled and peopled than the region around Samaria. The gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim is better and more abundant to-day than the whole vintage of Abiezer.

It was on Mount Gerizim that Jotham, the youngest son of Jerubbaal, delivered that quaint parable of the "trees in council," — the vine, the fig-tree, and the olive, — each refusing to leave their honorable and useful station for the empty privilege of lordship, and delegating this to the useless bramble. The folly which this parable cunningly exposed, long ago had its full reward; but the elements of the parable are there as striking as ever. As you go down from the mountain, you will observe how the ambitious bramble, climbing above the hanging rocks, has thrown its shadow, and twined its bands, around the orchards of fig and olive, and the vines on their terraces. Not only the customs of men, but the scenes of nature, in the Holy Land alike retain and repeat the narratives of Scripture, and clothe these with an intense reality. It almost seems providential that the aspect of this land should be kept so perfectly to illustrate the ancient record of the Hebrew and Christian history. Few and poor are the great monuments of the Jews compared with those of Greece and Rome and Egypt, — no temples, no statues, no sculptured sepulchres. Even the furniture of their holy place is pictured to us only on the frieze of a pagan arch of triumph. But their *land* is their monument, — a monument more striking and more enduring than the vast ruins of the greater empires. The Greece of to-day has no likeness to the Greece of Plato or Pericles. The Rome of to-day has few features of the empire, and none of the republic: life there is changed, if not degenerate. But in Palestine, on hill and plain, by the gateway, the well, and the new-made grave, you see the traditions of God's chosen people living before your eye.

A YEAR OF TRIAL; OR, LESSONS OF "THE TIMES."

CHAPTER VI.

IN a few days, Mr. Selby was so far recovered from his sickness as to be able to return again to his duties in the city. Mr. Alden kept his word to his wife, and saw Mr. Watkins, and told him that Dr. Lester thought Mr. Selby's sickness was, in a great measure, owing to over-exertion and anxiety. Mr. Watkins, of course, was very much astonished, and indeed almost indignant, at the supposition that he could over-work his clerks.

"Why, Mr. Alden, what do you think of me, if you think Selby has a hard time of it? Here I am, with all the weight and responsibility, not only of the large business in which he is my clerk, but of a great deal other business also, which, I can assure you, sir, is perplexing enough these hard times; and you see I don't break down and have the cholera. 'Pon honor, sir, I doubt if Dr. Lester knows any thing about it."

"But, Mr. Watkins," replied Mr. Alden dryly, "you must remember that you are a strong, healthy man, blessed with a good constitution; whereas Selby has not, nor will he ever have, your power of endurance. And although, as a business man myself, I, of course, know something about your cares and anxieties, I tell you they do not weigh one feather in comparison with the anxiety that preys upon the mind of a man like Selby, who knows, that, if sickness or any unforeseen calamity occurs, those dearest to him must suffer for the bare necessities of life."

"'Suffer for the bare necessities of life'! 'Pon honor, Alden, that is too absurd. 'Suffer for the bare necessities of life'! Ha, ho! That's amusing. Why, you know as well as I do that eight hundred dollars a year will do a great deal more than provide the 'bare necessities of life' for a prudent, economical family. No, no, my dear sir: I tell you the trouble is, our clerks ape us, their employers; and it's a matter of course they get embarrassed, and run into debt; and, all the time, their wives and children must be decked out with silks and jewels."

"Granted that what you say is true of many clerks and their families, it is not true of Edward Selby and his family. No one could live more simply and prudently than they do; unless,

indeed, they drank nothing but water, and ate nothing but corn-bread."

"Ay, sir; that's it. I dare say they live just as they used to when provisions were cheaper. 'Pon honor, it's no matter if they do suffer. Why, sir, when I commenced life, without a dollar to help myself with or friends to set me up, I was glad to eat herring instead of mutton, and mutton instead of turkey, and Indian bread instead of flour; and I should like to know why young men at the present day cannot do the same. Herring, rice, and meal are comparatively cheap. The probability is, sir, our young friend is too fastidious in his palate for his circumstances."

"Are you serious, Mr. Watkins?" asked Mr. Alden sternly, almost indignantly. "Do you undertake to say that educated, refined, and not very healthy people, like Edward Selby and his wife, should live on fare which, in this land of abundance, I should regret to see the meanest day-laborer confined to? Let me ask, sir, if you would like to live on herring and corn-bread."

"Ahem! well, yes: herring I like as a relisher; but I can't say I eat much corn-bread; it disagrees with me, as my digestive organs are not what they once were."

"Possibly corn-bread may not be the most healthful living for Selby, and his young, delicate wife, particularly while she is nursing two infants."

"Very like, sir, very like; but I maintain that no young man has any right to burden himself with a family until he has a reasonable prospect of supporting them. That always was my doctrine. I acted upon it myself; and I must be true to my own convictions."

"There again I agree with you perfectly," answered Mr. Alden, in a slow, measured tone, — one of his peculiarities when he was striving to repress his anger; "but, as Edward Selby did not marry without such a prospect, your doctrine does not apply to him. He has been imprudent and unfortunate, as we all are liable to be, but not in marrying."

"Can't his wife help him, — take boarders, or something of that sort? I don't see that there's any need of their being so straitened. My last clerk, Tompkins (you remember him), — well, sir, his wife nearly supported the family by keeping boarders;

and he was able to lay by two-thirds of his salary. That's the way he's got on so well in the world. His wife was really a helpmeet. She's a right smart woman; 'pon honor, she is."

"Unfortunately, Mr. Watkins, the cases are not quite parallel. Mrs. Tompkins, stout, hearty, and fifty, with no children, could do what delicate Mrs. Selby, twenty-six, with four children, two of them infants, would scarcely be expected to do. But it's no use beating round the bush in this way, Watkins. I called in to ask you if you cannot and will not release Selby an hour earlier each night, and also add to his salary one hundred dollars at least."

Mr. Watkins looked very much as if he would like to knock Mr. Alden down for making such an audacious proposal; but Mr. Alden was a few years his senior, and possessed what all his accumulated thousands would never give Mr. Watkins, — position and influence on account of his moral worth, consequently not such as wealth alone sometimes gives the meanest wretch that breathes among the worshippers of Mammon. So Mr. Watkins answered, as civilly as he could, that he would release his clerk an hour earlier at night, if his health, in the opinion of his physician, required it; taking care, however, not to add that it would be perfectly convenient for him to do so, as business had begun to be slack. But, with regard to the increase of salary, he went through with the hackneyed arguments familiar to all, and which the narrow-minded and selfish are for ever using in reference to all dependent or salaried people, — including alike the devoted, faithful, and gifted preacher of God's word, the untiring teacher of youth, the hard-working clerk, and the day-laborer, and servant in the kitchen, — "that people should conform to their circumstances; should not contract debts which they cannot pay; as they make their bed, they must lie in it; as they know what compensation they are to receive when they engage in any particular calling, it is their own affair, and no one's else, if they get into difficulty."

While Mr. Watkins was delivering his views, and the reasons by which they were sustained, upon the subject of discussion, he was walking rapidly to and fro in his counting-room, with his hands in his pockets, excepting when he withdrew one to emphasize a particular statement by shaking it at the cold, stern face of Mr. Alden. When he concluded, Mr. Alden answered, without

attempting any reply to his reasoning, which savored far more of that selfish but somewhat common proverb, "Take care of number one," than of that divine precept, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," —

"The question, Mr. Watkins, is simply this: Are Selby's services actually worth more to you than you pay him, or are they not? If they are worth more, are you willing to add one hundred dollars to his salary, in consideration of the fact that the expenses of living have very much increased since he entered your employment?"

"'Pon honor, sir, I'll make Selby a present of a hundred dollars," was the answer, without taking any notice of Mr. Alden's first interrogatory.

"Which he will never accept," was Mr. Alden's reply.

"The more fool he then; that's all. Not accept it? 'Pon honor, who does this young man consider himself? It will be a present, whether I give it to him outright or add it to his salary; so I don't see the difference."

"All the difference in the world between receiving one's due as a right or as a gift from one who is not particularly friendly."

"Well, Alden, I'll add the hundred dollars to his salary, if you think he's so much in need. But remember, it will not be my fault if he refuses to accept it. 'Pon honor, sir, I don't fancy this sort of thing when I've once made a fair bargain with a man. I suppose," he went on angrily, "Sam Jones, who is just twenty-one, will be married next, and come upon me to support him and his family."

"Mr. Watkins," said Mr. Alden, "are you not aware that it is one of the crying evils of the age, that young men receive such small salaries, and that such false views prevail with regard to household establishments, — owing, in a great measure, to the manner in which the young have been brought up, — that marriages cannot be prudently contracted, as it is considered, until a period of life that leaves young men a prey to all the temptations incident to a comparatively lonely condition, and which happy, virtuous family-ties would preserve them from? My clerks are, with a single exception, married men; and a more faithful, prudent, steady set I defy this or any other city to produce. I certainly am an advocate of early marriages."

"Of course," said Mr. Watkins, somewhat crestfallen, "you're

bound to speak well of the vessel which carries you safely along ; but, as I have never yet had the courage to venture in that, to me, uncertain bark of matrimony, I must be excused from thinking her altogether seaworthy."

Mr. Alden thought what he was too true a gentleman to say, — "If you had, Mr. Watkins, your name would not be associated, as it now is, with those who help to degrade her whom God gave to man as aid and comforter into a polluted, shameless thing, that has forfeited all claim to true womanhood."

Mrs. Selby's mind was no sooner free from anxiety about her husband than she discovered that the twins' colds, so inexplicable to her, was the whooping-cough, — that dread of all mothers, particularly for delicate infants. She wondered how they could have caught it, until remembering that Bridget took them with her one afternoon when she went into the village, having faithfully promised not to go with them into any house, — a promise she doubtless intended to break at the time she made it ; for Mrs. Selby recollected that she was always praising Rose, saying she was the very likes of her cousin's darlint that was dead and gone. This cousin, whose relationship to Bridget was as remote as such relationships usually are, lived in the village ; and to her house Bridget had probably taken them that afternoon, and there they had caught the whooping-cough. And Mrs. Selby sighed over the girl's unfaithfulness and unfeeling desertion of her. Nancy Payson would remain with her a few days longer, until she could procure a new aid in the kitchen. If such changes are matters of moment and perplexity to those who have ample means at their command, and can always obtain servants of some sort, they are doubly so to one with limited means and in feeble health. But Mrs. Selby, as it has been seen, was not a woman easily dismayed or cast down ; and, now that her husband was well and out again, and in many respects a changed man since his preservation from death on that fearful night, all minor trials and sorrows were comparatively insignificant to her ; and with a brave spirit she went onward to the future, trusting to be prepared for whatever it might bring.

Upon leaving his sick room, Mr. Selby's first act was to go to Mr. Alden, and confess how wrongly he had behaved towards him, and ask his forgiveness ; which was freely granted.

"I have always been, Edward," said Mr. Alden, "what

people call a cold, stern man; and I feel that I acted hastily in dismissing you as I did. Your situation with Mr. Watkins is not what I supposed it would be; yet I cannot advise you to break your engagement with him. Will you not allow me to advance you whatever may be necessary to the comfort of your family?"

"Never, sir, never!" was the quick reply; "unless, indeed, my wife and children are in danger of actually suffering. In that case, I may be glad of assistance from you, but not now. I feel that I deserve all my present privations, for I have brought them on myself; and I know Ellen would far rather share them with me than incur debts to any one, even to you. Let us preserve our independence, Mr. Alden, while we can. I have been chafing at the yoke that galled me ever since I left you. Now that I have learned to bear it patiently, let me get all the good from it it is capable of affording me, that I may be a free man next year in every sense of the word. That little brown cottage and its associations are becoming very dear to me; and, if its treasures are only spared, I can bravely endure all the trials and struggles which may be prepared for me under its roof."

"And if its treasures, or some of them, are taken from you, — not rifled by the hand of the robber, but taken by the same hand that has meted out to you your present trials, Edward?" said Mr. Alden kindly; for he knew that it was the opinion, both of Dr. Lester and Dr. Clarke, that, if Rose lived through the whooping-cough, the fragile, delicate little Lily could scarcely do so.

Mr. Selby paused before he answered, in a subdued tone, —

"The God who gave them will not take them from me unless I need the discipline; and, if he sees I do need it, I trust he will give me strength to bear it." And he left Mr. Alden, saddened, but relieved.

He had done what is always trying to a naturally proud and not thoroughly Christian spirit, — acknowledged a fault, and asked forgiveness; but, in doing it, he had the approval of his conscience. Upon returning home, his wife tenderly inquired why he had staid abroad so long, fearing he might have exerted himself beyond his strength. When he told her where he had been, and upon what errand, she looked up with a glad smile, and asked, —

"Was it the effect of your sickness, Edward, that you have been willing to do what was so repugnant to you before?"

"I believe it was, Ellen; or, rather, that was the immediate cause. Much as I suffered that night, I had intervals of consciousness and ease, in which I saw all the errors of my past life, and also the dangers which threatened me in the future. O Ellen! if the acts of our lives, and the thoughts of our hearts, stand out to our view in such fearfully bold relief in seasons of mortal peril, when we feel as perhaps we never feel at any other time the presence of God, how awful, how terrible, must that retribution be which they shall bring upon us when we shall stand in the presence of Infinite Purity! It seemed to me that all the wrong-doings, all the folly and indiscretion and perverseness, I had ever been guilty of, rose up before me that night, as stern reprovers of the past, and pleading monitors for the future; and I saw myself and my conduct in their true light, unveiled by self-deception or vain illusions. Ellen, I confessed my fault to Mr. Alden; and now to you, my sweet, uncomplaining wife, who have ever been as sunshine about my path, I must and will confess the far heavier wrong I have been guilty of towards you."

"O Edward! do not, do not!"

"I must speak now, Ellen, while I can. It will do me good; and it is due to you. I have been selfish, complaining, and exacting; visiting upon your gentle head and warm heart the imaginary wrongs I fancied I was receiving from others, — not intentionally, Ellen; God knows I ever meant to be a kind husband to you; but how could it be otherwise than that the demon of distrust and fretfulness which possessed me should cast some of its baleful shadow over her who is indeed the life of my life?"

There was a long pause; for, in mercy to his wife's imploring look, Mr. Selby said nothing more upon this subject. At last, his wife said, in a voice trembling with agitation, —

"But you said that night, Edward, that you were willing to go, if it was God's will. How was it?"

"I did feel so, Ellen. I have not much faith in deathbed repentances; although we know our Saviour assured the penitent thief on the cross that he should be with him that day in paradise. But my mind for some time past, ever since we came to M——,

has been interested in religion, which has proved such a reality to you; and then our family worship has been a great help to me also; so that, before I was taken sick, I had, in fact, begun a new life; at least, there had been a change in my aims and purposes."

"Yes, yes; I know that was the case."

"Well, after that terrible retrospect, the first effect was overpowering despair, so deep and hopeless that all seemed utter darkness to me. Then it seemed as if a voice said unto me, 'Call upon the Lord, and he will deliver thee; unto thy God, and he will abundantly pardon;' and I did so. After that, I prayed: my heart was full; and I prayed in faith, and in the feeling that my prayer would be answered. Then I knew that I was forgiven; and, for a moment, I wished — it was a selfish wish — to depart, and be at peace. Then you spoke to me, Ellen, and I answered you as I did. When I bowed my head upon my breast, it was to pray for perfect submission to God's will. As soon as I was relieved, and it was probable that I should recover, I determined that henceforth, divine grace helping me, I would walk humbly in the fear and service of the Lord; and as the first-fruits of my repentance, and to prove the genuineness of my new resolutions, I have been to see Mr. Alden. Now I feel, that, if some heavy affliction should be laid upon us, — which, from a remark made by Mr. Alden, I fear may be the case, — I shall know how to submit, without repining, to God's will."

"Did Mr. Alden speak in a general way, or did he refer to any particular cause we may have for such a fear?" asked Mrs. Selby anxiously.

"I do not know; but I suppose, my dear, the lives of these little darlings hang by a slender thread in the progress of their present disease."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Selby; "I suppose it is so. Still, I trust they will get through it; and if not, — why, they will only be called home a little while before their sorrowing parents." And, as she spoke, she pressed Lily closer in her arms, and looked fondly down upon Rose in the cradle at her feet.

After the conversation related above between Mr. Alden and Mr. Selby, the former saw Mr. Watkins, as before narrated. Having very little doubt that the addition to the salary would be offered in such a way that Mr. Selby would decline it, he said to his wife, after telling her what had passed between them, —

"You must do all you can for Ellen and the children, Emily."

"All is very little," she replied. "Ellen needs some one to assist her in the care of the twins; and she cannot afford it, and she would never allow me to furnish her a girl. So far as nourishing food, and such delicacies as her present state of health may require, would assist her, I dare say she would be willing to receive them from me, and also any personal aid I might be able to render her; but that would be nothing, compared with what she actually needs."

"Oh, yes, Emily! that would be a great deal, as she would tell you. Well, there is nothing for it, as I see, but for you and Mrs. Grant to do all you can for her without letting her feel the burden of too great obligation to you. Surely Mrs. Payson can spare Nancy to go in and take the twins occasionally."

"Yes, and she will, I dare say; although she has fretted a great deal because she has been away from her these few days past, always winding up with the favorite phrase, 'Nancy always will be a fool, and there's an end on't.'"

"Forgetting that she herself taught her daughter her self-sacrificing spirit."

"Yes, entirely. But you know Nancy does every thing amiably; while her mother always hid her real feeling under her rather forbidding manners, as though she did not like to own to herself, or let others know, what a kindly heart she possessed."

"Mamma," little Louise came running in, "there's a girl in the kitchen to see you."

"Ask her in here, my dear."

In a moment, Louise returned, with a stout, coarse-looking Irish girl, upon whose countenance were legibly written good humor and indolence.

"If yer please, marm, Bridget Mahony said yees would be afther wanting a girl, an' bid me come to yees."

"Are you accustomed to general housework?"

"Indade, that I was, at home in the ould cuntry, marm. It's not long since I been over; an' I've lived in one place only, — that's in the city, marm; but the place didn't shute me."

"Did Bridget think you would answer my purpose? You know it would be useless for you to undertake, unless you can do, the work."

"Yes, indade she did, marm; an' she said yer bees the most ilegantest misthress in the wourld, and the darlints the swatest iver was, and that meself's the very girl for yer, marm."

"Why did she not return to me, then, if she thought so highly of the place?"

"Och! an' shure an' she would, marm; but a great leddy beyant offered her the great wage to go to her, and she wint."

"Well," said Mrs. Selby, "if Bridget told you what you would have to do, and you are sure you can do the work, and are willing to come for the wages I give, and will assist me in the care of the children, I will take you on a week's trial."

"To be shure, marm, I'll come; an' it's me delight to take care of childer. Shure an' this little crathure bees sick now?"

"Yes, they are both sick; and you see — what is your name?"

"Kathleen O'Rory, at yer sarvice, marm."

"You see, Kathleen, I shall be very much confined with them, and I shall expect you to do your best."

"Niver fear that, marm, but I'll be after shuting yees intirely."

"When will you come?"

"To-morrow's the day, marm."

"Very well;" and so the bargain was concluded.

Mrs. Selby was aware she could not expect to obtain the services of an experienced or very capable girl for a dollar and a quarter a week, while families about her were paying two, two and a half, and three dollars; so she resigned herself with a sigh to Kathleen's slatternly appearance. At that moment, Mrs. Grant came in; and Mrs. Selby informed her that she had engaged another girl.

"Not the one I just met at the door, I hope," she answered.

"The same. Bridget sent her to me."

Mrs. Grant shook her head. "She'll never do for you, Mrs. Selby."

"Well, I must try her, at all events."

Mrs. Grant was right. Kathleen O'Rory was good-natured, — that is, when she had her own way, — but the veriest slattern and idler that ever darkened the doors of a decent dwelling. True, she liked children; for she would leave her work at any time to play with Charlie, who was drawn to her by her good-

nature and funny ways, and was constantly making excuses to get into the kitchen. But, when it came to quieting the twins, her only skill consisted in saying, "Whist now, will yees?" and singing a ditty so doleful, that, although Mrs. Selby was not naturally a nervous woman, she could scarcely sit still and listen to her.

But the kitchen? If Bridget was constantly making blunders, she was tidy and careful; but, under the present administration, the little place presented a most disheartening aspect. It is not necessary to particularize; for many a housekeeper in the land has probably seen her nice kitchen in the same sorry state during the trial period "of changing help." In addition to dirt and disorder, Kathleen was heedlessly extravagant; and Mrs. Selby thought, if she would only be as diligent in other things as she was in rattling the covers, and pouring the coal into the devoted little stove, the work of the kitchen would go on very well.

As the week drew near a close, Mrs. Selby informed her maid of all work that she should not need her services any longer. Kathleen seemed entirely confounded, and asked, with heightened color and raised voice, —

"An' shure, marm, if Kathleen O'Rory don't shute yeess, who's the girl that will?"

"One who is a little neater, Kathleen, and less extravagant."

"Extravegint is it, marm? Didn't I live in the ould counthry, where every thing was to the fore, and the misthress would be often saying, 'Kathleen, niver yeess spare a bit; there's plenty to do with, an' yeess needn't be savin' at all'? An' didn't she praise me tables an' so bricht and nice? An' yeess call me extravegint, an' talks about one's being nater nor I!"

"Why did you leave so good a mistress, Kathleen?"

"An' shure, wasn't it all for brother John I kim over heres to this poor counthry, marm, where they gridge a poor girl the manes to do with? An' shure, at ony rate, I've worked a dollar an' a quarter's worth for yeess: yeess should consider that, marm."

"And you should consider, Kathleen, that, if you do well for me at low wages while you are learning the ways of our country, you could go from me, and get high wages. Good service will always command good pay."

There was no lack of girls in want of situations. The day

after Mrs. Selby informed Kathleen that she would not answer her purpose, no less than four other Irish girls applied for the place. None of them, however, proved satisfactory to Mrs. Selby in appearance or recommendation. The next applicant was an American girl, who had been working in the neighboring factory, and had been obliged to leave on account of her health. She was fresh from the wilds of New Hampshire, and a genuine Yankee in every sense of the word. As she brought a good character from the agent of the factory, and thought herself equal to the work of the family, Mrs. Selby engaged her, trusting to time, and such influences as would be around her, to soften her manners. To her dismay, however, she found Betsey Green quite unprepared to take a servant's place; for the day she came, after placing the dinner on the table, she walked in with Lily in her arms, and seated herself at the table.

Mrs. Selby told her Rose might wake, perhaps, and she did not wish to have the twins brought to the table. She left, but not with a very good grace. After the meal was over, she said to Mrs. Selby, rather defiantly, —

"Du you mean, Miss Selby, you don't allow your help to come to table?"

"It is not the custom, Betsey; and you see for yourself it would be very inconvenient. Either you or I must stay away to attend the children."

"Sposen we take turns, Miss Selby. I kinder like you and the place; but what would the folks to hum say, if they knowed I didn't set down to table with you? When I lived at Squire Jones's a spell, we all sat down together; and the squire's folks are reckoned right smart, I tell you. The gals have a piany, and all."

"I am sorry to hurt your feelings, Betsey; but I do not see how I can make any change in my family arrangements. It is the custom with you; it is not with us: that makes the difference."

"Waal, I must say, it's kinder curus, Miss Selby: you don't seem a bit stuck up, arter all. But I can't stay, no how, if that's the case; so good arternoon, marm."

"But you will stay till I get some one, Betsey?" said Mrs. Selby, in some dismay.

"Rather guess not, Miss Selby: don't think I'm good enough

for that, if I ain't good enough to eat my victuals where you do."

So ended experiment number two.

Number three was Irish again; proved capable and willing; but, at the expiration of the fourth day, was found, late in the evening, drunk on the kitchen floor.

Number four was a young girl of fourteen, very good for her years and strength, but quite unequal to the work of the family.

The natural result of Mrs. Selby's overtaxed powers was a violent, nervous headache, accompanied with some fever, which prostrated her for several days. At this crisis, a neat, modest-looking girl applied, stating that she had been doing waiter-work in Mr. Beltraver's family, and had been receiving two dollars a week there; but she found her duties so hard and difficult, that she preferred to work for less wages in such a family as Mrs. Selby's, for the remainder of the summer at least. Her appearance was so prepossessing, her manners so good, and her answers to Mrs. Selby's inquiries so satisfactory, that she engaged her, with many self-congratulations upon her good fortune. For a week, matters went on swimmingly in the kitchen department, under the capable administration of Rose Norton.

While all these changes in Mrs. Selby's domestic affairs had been taking place, Mrs. Grant had managed so adroitly with Mrs. Payson, that she, of her own accord, had volunteered to let Nancy go to Mrs. Selby's assistance when she was alone or sick.

The twins were now becoming every day more and more troublesome; although Lily, to the surprise of all, was much less violently attacked than Rose. Dr. Lester came out once a week; and Dr. Clarke was unremitting in his attentions, proving himself the kind friend, as well as the good physician.

PAUL AND AGRIPPA. — THE ALMOST-CHRISTIAN,
THE ALTOGETHER-CHRISTIAN.

A SERMON BY REV. J. H. HEYWOOD.

ACTS xxvi. 29: "Paul said, I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

THIS was the earnest exclamation of St. Paul, in reply to King Agrippa, when the monarch, moved and roused by the apostle's earnest enthusiasm, had given expression to his emotions in the declaration, — "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." The declaration of the king was probably made in all sincerity. At the time, he felt the force of the argument presented by the apostle; he was familiar with the writings of the ancient prophets; he knew how many and how clear were the intimations in them of a Messiah, of a Saviour to come in some after-time; he doubtless had heard a great deal about the life, character, and teachings of the wonderful Being who had claimed to be the promised one, and to the preaching of whose religion Paul devoted heart and life; and, very possibly, often in his secret thoughts he had proposed the question to himself, "May not this really have been the One of whom prophets spake and the Psalmist sung?" even before St. Paul stood in his presence, and, with fervency and heroic boldness, pleaded the cause of Christianity. So he was prepared in degree, both in mind and feeling, to listen with interest to the earnest preacher. He had expected to be interested; for he had heard of the effects produced in various places by St. Paul's preaching. He knew that he must be a man of mental power; and mental power always has a charm, a fascination; for it is the world's great idol. He expected, then, to be interested; but, when the apostle stood before him, he found himself more than interested. He had looked for an hour of intellectual entertainment; but he found it an hour of something else, and something far beyond mere entertainment. He had thought, perhaps, that he should experience a pleasure in listening to the speaker, such as he would have had in listening to Cicero or some of the great rhetoricians. But no: emotions were awakened of a very different kind, and far deeper than he had imagined would be awakened. St. Paul stood before him, not as a skilful rhetorician,

not as an experienced orator, to please the luxurious monarch with the graces of oratory, nor to offer to him the sweet incense of flattery; but as an earnest man, who had a cause of infinite importance committed to him, a cause important alike to the monarch on his throne and the peasant in his hut, and who, while he forgot not the respect due the monarch as the possessor of authority and the ruler of men, yet saw in that monarch *a man*, and spoke to him as a man. And as that keen eye fastened itself upon the king, and that significant finger was steadily directed towards him, and as from those lips, which never were opened in vain, flowed forth that eloquence, not of the schools indeed, but of a great heart all alive with truth and love, Agrippa forgot his kingship, and remembered only his manhood. For the time, Paul was the king, the true monarch; and he who sat upon the throne was ready to do homage to the prisoner in chains, or rather to the truth which spake through that prisoner, and gave to his burning words more than mortal power. Agrippa was not *entertained*; but he was awed, touched, affected to the very depths of his being, for the time; and he gave sincere utterance to his emotions when he exclaimed, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

For the time he was deeply affected. Agrippa soon remembered that he was an earthly monarch. The cushion upon which he reclined was pleasant to his limbs, the insignia of power around the room were acceptable to his eye, very grateful were the words and signs of deference and reverence from cringing officials, and very hard and cold were the chains which hung from the arms of the preacher of the unpopular religion; and so he suffered the emotion to pass away. We do not hear that he, who "was almost persuaded to be a Christian," ever became a Christian. His better nature had for the moment been aroused, but in vain. Genuine religious feelings had been awakened; but they were permitted to slumber again. A true ideal of life was seen, acknowledged, and then laid aside. At the moment, he determined to be true to his deep and honest convictions; but the moment passed away, and he relapsed into his previous worldliness and irreligion. The interview with St. Paul, which might have been unto life, was unto death; for a religious privilege not improved is an injury, not a blessing; and religious emotions and principles, not acted up to and obeyed, leave the heart colder and more insensible than it was to the claims of truth and duty. The

golden opportunity was suffered to pass by; and such an opportunity, when gone, is gone for ever. And Agrippa is remembered now, not because he became a king in early youth, but because he did not become a Christian in his maturity; not because he availed himself of opportunities of wealth and self-aggrandizement, but because he did not avail himself of the opportunity of becoming an earnest, devoted follower of Christ. And now, as we study the records of our holy religion for instruction and guidance, for warning and encouragement, he stands before us as the type and representative of the Christian that might have been, but was not, — of the *almost Christian*; while St. Paul stands as the representative of the Christian that might have been, and was; not of the almost, but *the entire, Christian*.

Very different was the condition of the two, as they stood face to face in that memorable interview, the account of which is so intensely interesting to the student of character, as well as the lover of Christianity. Agrippa was a king, not of a large kingdom, but with power enough and wealth enough to invest him with influence, and make him the object of envy, as well as the recipient of flattery; Paul was a poor man, the preacher of an unpopular religion, and, withal, a prisoner. The interview was over. Agrippa returned to the pleasures and pursuits which royalty placed within his reach; Paul soon after took his journey, a prisoner still, to the far-distant Rome. Agrippa continued to wield his power until old age, I believe, and died a king; Paul continued his earnest labors in behalf of Christianity, and died, in old age, a martyr to the faith which was dearer to him than life. So life ended with each; but all was not then ended. The king doubtless exercised an influence during his life; for the possessor of power, by virtue of that possession, must necessarily exert an influence. And, moreover, we have reason to believe that he was a man not destitute of intellectual ability and executive power; and such men always wield an influence, whether on thrones or not; and that influence doubtless perpetuated itself, for what a man does, whether for good or ill, lives after him. That influence, deep and real as all influence is, may be, must be, felt even now somewhere; for as a disturbance of the waters in one portion, according to the assertions of philosophers, affects the wide ocean everywhere, so an influence exerted upon humanity at one time really lives through all time. Persons are on earth

now, destitute alike of the power and the blessedness of Christianity, in consequence of the transmitted irreligion of King Agrippa. The influence exerted by Paul is clear and distinct, and, so far from becoming less visible as the ages roll by, stands out continually with ever-increasing prominence, with ever-brightening radiance. It is seen not only in numberless individual lives, but in the intellectual and spiritual life of nations. The current of the world's thinking has been, and is, deeply, thoroughly affected by the thoughts and the life of St. Paul. The intellectual leaders of men, the Origenes and Augustines, the Luthers and Wesleys, the Lockes and Newtons, the Chalmerses and Channings, have all had a higher range given to their thoughts; they have been made better thinkers, as well as better men, every way, in consequence of the words spoken, the thoughts expressed, the deeds done, by him who stood as a prisoner before Herod Agrippa, and died a cruel death at Rome. And not only the world's intellectual leaders have been thus affected, but earnest, thoughtful men and women in life's lowly places have had their minds expanded, their hearts warmed, their lives purified, by the noble thinking and the noble living of him who was not almost, but altogether, a Christian. A genuinely Christian life, that it is a power in the world, an ever-enduring and ever-increasing power, the exhaustless influence of the life of St. Paul strikingly shows.

Not, then, when the earthly lives of Agrippa and Paul ended, had the end come. They still continued to live in the influence which their lives had exerted.

Nor, when their earthly lives ended, was life really ended. One stage of being was passed through, another was to be entered upon. They went out from one world only to go into another; and, in that other, who can doubt what the relative positions are which were assigned on the one hand to him who once aroused himself from his deep worldliness to become for a moment almost a Christian, and then to fall back again and become altogether worldly; and, on the other, to him who, having once become altogether a Christian, so continued? It is not for us to raise the veil which separates the spiritual from the visible world; it is not for us to say what judgment the all-wise and the all-holy Judge has pronounced upon any of his children: but this we must say, that if the strong words of our Saviour mean any thing; if there

is any real difference between virtue and vice, between faithfulness and unfaithfulness, between usefulness and uselessness, between a life for which the world is every way and for ever better and a life for which the world is no better, if not every way the worse ; then there must have been as great a difference in the positions respectively assigned St. Paul and King Agrippa as there was in the lives lived by them, and the influence exerted by them.

They stand, then, before us, these two, as types and representatives, not only of the characters of the almost and the entire Christian, but also of the influence exerted by such, and of the position to be assigned such in the world of eternal realities.

The difference between the almost and the entire Christian would seem to be but a slight difference. The almost Christian, one would suppose, might easily and naturally develop into the entire Christian. And so he might, and so he often does ; and when this development is going on, when the progress is steadily upward as well as onward, the difference is of degree rather than of kind, — the difference between the opening blossom and the perfect flower. But, when the progress ceases, then the difference is real and wide. Have you not sometimes observed a beautiful bud, which seemed almost ready to expand into the flower, stop in its development, its leaves not unfolding, and losing their fresh and living hues, and assuming the withered, yellow appearance of premature decay ? Place that poor bud, with the worm in its heart, and its faded leaves, Death's insignia, by the side of the rose in its perfectness of form and radiance of beauty : in them you have a type of the almost Christian, of him in whom the spirit of religion opened only to die ; and of the entire Christian, of him in whom the religious spirit daily and hourly grows in beauty and in power. How great the difference ! It is not a difference of degree, but of kind, — the difference between life and death. The almost Christian must have a constant tendency upward, or he will have a constant tendency downward ; and, unless his tendency be upward, the difference between him and the entire Christian is not only real and wide, but it is radical. It reaches to the very root of character ; it penetrates to the inmost core of being.

There are, on one of the mountains of the Alleghany range, two streamlets starting from springs but a few feet apart from each other ; and it would seem as if the little streams might readily

mingle and flow on together through their whole course. But no: though the divergence at first is but slight, it gradually increases; and, as you follow each for a short distance, you find, that, while the one goes towards the rising, the other makes its way steadily towards the setting sun, and the rivers into which they widen out are separated by hundreds of miles and by mighty mountain-barriers, though the springs from which they rise are separated but by a distance which an infant could measure. So with the character of the almost Christian of the Agrippa stamp, and of the entire Christian of the stamp of St. Paul. Though at first the divergence may seem slight, it is as real as between the Alleghany streamlets; and at last it finds its measure, not in hundreds of miles, but in the distance which intervenes between the highest heaven and the lowest hell. Picture to yourselves the peace, the purity, the nobleness, the magnanimity, the infinite bliss, into which genuine piety expands, and finds its ultimate and fitting expression; picture to yourselves the unrest, the impurity, the meanness, the hollowness, the degradation, the utter destitution of all true happiness, in which impiety, irreligion, finds its last result, and you have a fitting and unexaggerated representation of the final issues of the spirit which St. Paul and King Agrippa respectively represent, — of the almost and the altogether Christian.

And now, if, turning back from the results in which these characters ultimate themselves, we ask in what this difference, which we have found to be so radical, consists, I think we shall find the answer to be simply this: St. Paul was faithful to his religious convictions; Agrippa was unfaithful. It is not that St. Paul's religious privileges were so much greater than those of Agrippa; it is not that the one had so much more light than the other. Agrippa had light enough to have lighted his pathway to the region of eternal day; but that light he would not walk in, but suffered it to pass from him, and thus left himself nothing but darkness in which to grope his way to the region of rayless night. Faithfulness or unfaithfulness to one's conviction, — in this consists the radical difference between the characters described. The almost Christian is convinced of the existence and authority of the great Sovereign; but he is not true to his conviction. He acts not up to it; he lives not in accordance with it. God is not in his life; God is not in his thought; and the temple

of his mind, no longer illumined by that glorious presence, the divine Shechinah, becomes dark and desolate, and life becomes profitless and barren.

The almost Christian is convinced of the great fact of immortality; but he is not true to his conviction. He lives not as becomes an heir of immortality. He sees that great, awakening light; but he lives as if it had never dawned upon his mind or thrown its radiance over his life; and so that light becomes dimmer and dimmer, until at last it is like that dull, red, sombre light, which in the evening we sometimes see in the west, when gloomy clouds cover almost the whole horizon, and which light we know must soon utterly disappear and be lost in the coming night, instead of being like that clear, pure, animating radiance, which in the morning betokens the uprising of the sun and the coming on of a glorious day.

The almost Christian is convinced of the duty of living an earnest, devout, religious life; but he is not true to his conviction. He feels that he ought to pray; but he does not pray. He feels that he ought to exert a religious influence over companions and friends; but he does not exert a religious influence. He sees, perhaps, that some of his companions have habits, whether of self-indulgence, or of neglect of rightful and God-appointed duties; and he feels that he ought by earnest words, and the daily presentation of a character strong in Christian principle and lustrous with a pure and holy spirit, to help those companions break the thralldom in which they are bound, and enter into the liberty wherewith Christ makes men free. This he feels that he ought to do; but this he does not do. The earnest word is not spoken; the winning, animating example is not presented; the companions are not aided in their life-journey; and, in the mean while, he himself is rapidly approaching life's end: and oh! the dreary unrest, the utter destitution of real peace, as he feels how untrue he has been to himself, his friends, and his God!

In unfaithfulness to his convictions do we find the distinctive characteristic of the almost Christian. It is not that he has not light, but that he does not walk in it. It is not that he has not strength, but that he does not use it. It is not that he has not knowledge of Christ and the resurrection, and the immortal life of which the resurrection is the sign and the pledge, and of the high and important duties which in the light of that

life stand clear and distinct; but that, Agrippa-like, he shuts his eye to the all-surrounding radiance, and turns away from conscience, though it speaks with all the earnestness and persuasiveness of St. Paul; and reclines again upon the couch of luxurious ease, and yields himself to the earthly influences, which, siren-like, allure him to an inglorious grave.

O friends! let not Agrippa be the type, the representative, of your characters. Be true to your own deepest and best convictions. With St. Paul, aim to be not almost, but altogether, Christian. Then will your life have a Pauline earnestness, and you will enjoy peace kindred to that in which the heart of the great apostle rejoiced. Then, being able to say with him, "to live is Christ," you will also be able to say, "to die is gain." Take who will the life of Agrippa, with his crown and sceptre, with his palace and his wealth; but give me the life of Paul, with the heart of Paul and the hope of Paul and the peace of Paul, and I covet not the palace, I ask not the diadem. The lowliest lot on earth, with the consciousness of being altogether a Christian, — is it not infinitely preferable to the highest lot, attended with the consciousness that, though in outward seeming one may be almost a Christian, in reality he is altogether unchristian?

Paul and Agrippa, — they stand before us types of characters, representatives of lives, utterly unlike and antagonistic, — the almost, the altogether, Christian. Do these characters ever seem to approximate? and does the difference between them ever appear slight and unimportant? Behold Paul ever ascending, and Agrippa ever descending. Shall we ascend with the one, or sink with the other?

THE CROSS ON EARTH, THE CROWN IN HEAVEN.

LAST evening, we strolled languidly out for a short walk, as a refreshment after the warm summer day. There had been a copious and lovely shower, making all things fresh and fragrant as a new creation. We directed our steps toward a narrow bridge, where high hills, covered with trees and shrubs in all the

luxuriant greenness of midsummer, rose against the western sky. It had been a gorgeously beautiful sunset; but the rich and glowing hues had faded away, and left the soft ashen and golden clouds mingling their tints over the hills in a wild, unearthly beauty and grace.

On the right, in the clear light of the open sky, where the clouds had parted for the descent of the sun, the silvery evening star shone faintly in the glow of sunset; while on the left, toward the east, against a dark background of heavy clouds, wild and lurid in form and coloring, rose, clear, bright, and warm, the holy cross of the spire of the Catholic church, catching and reflecting back to heaven the lingering rays of that golden sunset. I caught them first, both cross and star, with all their surroundings of clouds, hills, trees, light and shade and coloring, clearly reflected in the calm, dark water beneath.

Never was there a more beautiful and striking combination. On the left, the *cross*, standing out in bold relief against the wild darkness; on the right, the *star*, in the clear, serene, sunset light; and both softly reflected in the stream below, which gently and silently, but surely, was bearing all things on its bosom onward and outward to the far ocean.

How adequately describe the hidden beauty of Nature's allegory, here pictured in such rare tints and such real loveliness?

For our earthly portion, the lurid clouds and darkness, signs of tempest and struggle, and the *cross* in clear relief against them all, as our lot and portion to be endured; and yet, O blessed faith! as our help and glory, shining with a golden lustre forth from the wildness and gloom. Above, the *star*, growing more bright as the light of the earthly sun faded and paled, glowing serenely and holily forth from the clouds, as the recompense after the storm and gloom, — the starry diadem promised to those who nobly endure the cross. And all reflected in the river of our mortal life, bearing onward with resistless might alike the impurities which disfigure its surface, and the vital life of its bosom, to the great ocean of eternity. The cross on *earth*, the crown in *heaven*! Who could see or muse upon this picture, without intensely realizing the deep spiritual meaning and beauty of Nature? Nature, "kindly nurse" to our moral and religious, as to our languid physical, being; by her combinations of light and shade, of earth and heaven, touching every spring of our higher life,

until they all vibrate harmoniously to the everlasting and glorious music of creation.

As we returned home through the confined air of close streets and houses, we saw, through every open space, the starry diadem grow larger, brighter, more glorious, through the gathering darkness. With its glittering sister-crowns of night, it shone soft and radiant as the eyes of angels, looking serenely down upon our restless, turbid life, and bidding us look ever *upward*, in Christ's faith and love and hope, above the *cross* to the starry *crown*.

SHADOWS.

WONDROUSLY beautiful the shadows lay,
 Flung by each leaf that caught the lessened light,
 When, like a pall across the face of day,
 Crept the strange darkness that forestalled the night.

Marked by the sloping pencil of its beam,
 Fair is each outline pictured on the wall;
 And lo! like miracle, a heavenly gleam,
 Shaped to a golden crescent, rests on all.*

Reason may ask of old Philosophy
 The wherefore of so marvellous a thing;
 But, while she waits her answer, Faith can see,
 And loyal own, the Master's signet-ring.

Stamped on each shadow of our life, it glows;
 And, when the gathering gloom of mortal ill
 Thickens around, a surer radiance shows,
 Telling the soul, "Thy God is with thee still."

A. D. T. W.

* An appearance observed at Pittsfield, Mass., during the annular eclipse of the sun, May 26, 1854.

THE WATER OF THE WELL BY THE GATE.

BUSIED with his efforts to consolidate the kingdom into which he had but lately come, David is startled in his capital city, Jerusalem, to learn that the Philistines, fearful of the results of a new and closer unity among the tribes, had surprised and taken Bethlehem. In no condition to make head against them, so urgent the extremity in which he is placed that he is obliged to withdraw with some of his most trusty followers, and again seek the protection of that cave which had so many times befriended his need, and which lay a little to the south of his native city. While lying there, sore pressed by his enemies, and waiting some favorable change in his affairs, all about him recalling events of the past, — for not far away lay the dear roofs and familiar fields of his native place, — a sudden and intense longing springs up for a taste of the water which in boyhood he drew from the well by the gate in Bethlehem; “and he said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!” His three trusty friends heard him, and, though men of war, sympathized probably in that irresistible yearning. It was not an easy thing to gratify him. Along the valley of Rephaim, which stretched between them and the city, lay the encamped host, terrible in number and in might, the yet unsubdued foe of Israel. But these three were men of valor; they were already renowned for feats of arms at which our credulity halts; they loved their king; they had felt for and stood by him in all his vicissitudes; and now they agreed that this desire of his heart should be answered. Departing secretly, they broke through the camp of the enemy, entered the city, drew the water from the well at the gate, and, returning, presented it to their astonished master. But David was a man quick to perceive which way true nobleness lay. Selfish, grossly so sometimes, he certainly was, yet quick to feel and to own it. This time, the whole circumstance appealed at once to the nobleness of his nature. The longing for the water gave way before admiration at the devotion of his friends, and a sense of the danger in which the hand of Jehovah had shielded them. He could not taste that which had been so obtained. It was not his, but God’s.

He took it, and poured it out reverently as an offering to him, saying, "Far be it from me, O Lord, that I should do this! Is not this the blood of the men who went in jeopardy of their lives?" Soon after this, these formidable enemies were entirely vanquished, and the people for ever relieved of their fears; and David returned in peace and in honor to his capital city.

The fact thus related is not without its significance, as proving that David had not lost his early simplicity in this assumption of power. That well of water was linked in memory with his days of boyhood, — happy days, when care was not, nor any grief or disappointment had set itself between him and enjoyment; simple days, when he dreamed not of kingdoms; innocent days, when as yet he had not sinned. There he had stooped to slake his thirst. The very taste of the water of the well by the gate was in his mouth, as the thought of it came back, and made the longing. Bright hours had passed beside it. When the day's task was done, there had clustered the dark-eyed maidens of Israel with their water-bags, there the weary laborer from the hill and field, there the gray-haired sage; while on the outer circle, patiently awaiting their evening draught, stood the camel and the lamb. There, beneath the twilight of an Eastern sky, words of neighborly kindness, or of a deeper and more trustful love, or of a calmer wisdom, had been often uttered; while he, leaning on his shepherd's crook, had mused of life's opening duties, and the possibilities of its strange warfare. Not many years had passed. The bright light of youth still lingered in his waving hair; his step was swift and light, and in his eye the undimmed blaze of hope. And yet his shepherd-days were over; and he stood where youth's boldest fancy had not dared to place him, — Israel's anointed king; he who had only led Jesse's sheep, a leader of mighty men. He had done brave deeds; was the centre of vast hopes; was mighty now, though for the moment under the shadow of the cloud. The wing of memory wafted him again from that lone cave to the fair side of the well by the gate. Again he heard the sweet music of maidenly voices; again he bent to the suggestions of experience; again the patient camel knelt, and the tender lamb bleated; and he was a boy, leaning on that old, familiar shepherd's crook, under the twilight sky. The thought was too much; and the longing burst into

irrepressible language, — “Oh that one would bring me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!”

Who is there of us, who has passed ever so little beyond the period of youth, — especially if, like David, our early experience have been that of discipline and change, — who cannot enter fully, intensely, into this longing? Who has not had such longings, as Memory, with *Æolian* finger, swept the tender heart-chords, and brought, in low, sad, dreamy melody, the things of other days again before him? Who has not bitterly, — ay, in his manhood's sternness even, — bitterly wept at the memory of things which only come again thus, — those dear old things of the past, that lie far back along the way we have come? How strong the feeling that apparently insignificant things will awaken! The tree that hung its branches over the roof which was our early home, — how would we stretch our limbs, weary with our daily strife, once more beneath its refreshing! How do we ramble over the old fields, revisit familiar haunts, swing in the same barn, jump from the same mow, coast on the same hill, skate on the same pond, sit in the old place in the old pew in the old church, or eat our merry dinner from the same tin pail, with the same relish, at the noontime of the winter-school, slaking our thirst from the same old bucket at the same old well! How do all these, and more than these, stretch in broad vistas along toward the horizon of the past! and how gladly would we sacrifice any thing of present success, could we once more be children, ourselves unchanged, and all unchanged about us! So bright the mirage which rises behind us, as we pause in the stern work of life, and long for the rest, the freedom, the composure of those glad days ere care came to mar the long dream of pleasure!

It is a blessed privilege this which we enjoy of living over again the bygone of life; a delight, as well as oftentimes a sadness. But, that it may be truly a privilege, we must watch ourselves narrowly. Indulged unwisely, allowed to degenerate into a false and sickly sentiment, to grow into an unreasonable and absorbing craving, it can only be fruitful of mischief; for what we crave is an impossibility. “The bolts of the irrevocable past” will not be withdrawn. There is now no fabled fount at which we may renew our youth. The by-gones cannot come again. If you would realize this impossibility, revisit, after a long absence, some well-remembered spot, — one which has haunted you in

many wanderings, and has been the Mecca of your memory. Though you go back yourself fresh and unchanged in feeling, — your heart palpitating almost audibly in its eagerness to realize in vision once more what memory has kept so holy and secure, — you find that the hand of Time has marked change on every thing; and the very sky above you seems not of the same remembered blue. Life has been in between you and the things of your remembrance, — stern, rigid, exacting life, — altering every proportion of the past; and you are changed, and they are changed, and all is changed. I remember that one of the strongest desires of this sort that I have had was to revisit the scenes of early schoolboy days, where I had passed two years separated by the ocean from my parents. They were dreadful years in some respects; and yet they had always a peculiar hold upon my memory. In all the changes and vicissitudes of life, this one desire held its place, until, when more than twenty years had gone, I found myself upon the spot. I learned a lesson I shall not soon forget. I could not find a familiar face. The old schoolhouse was in decay; the broad fields had shrunk to common pastures; the ample playground, the mimic theatre of many a well-remembered strife, was shrivelled to a meagre yard. I entered the same house, and stood in the same room in which our four beds once were; and felt that it was desecrated by its single bed, and carpet, and papered wall, and modern appliances of comfort. I drank of the same water from the same well; but it was all in vain. The boy had gone; the times were changed; there was no joy in the revisiting; and I wished I had left undisturbed the memory of what once was. Perhaps David was wise, upon merely selfish grounds, in refusing to drink the water. Would it have had the old flavor that it had when he raised the vessel dripping from the well, and drank, — the flavor that youth, toil, innocence, give? or, as it touched his lips, would not the clustering memories have stayed his hand, and left the draught untouched?

Nor is it only the impossibility that should make us beware how we give way too much to such emotions. As distance lends enchantment, so memory is apt to flatter, leaving out the darker tints, and giving only those which glow with brightness; so that, under any circumstances, this picture of memory is not a sure view of childhood. As one sometimes, of a summer's afternoon,

wonders that the cloud, lying so soft and fleecy far down the eastern sky, can be that which not long ago hung its black wrath overhead ; so the ills of childhood, black and fearful then, under the light of our now westering sun have lost all that made them dreadful, and wear only the mellowed aspect of distance. Were the longing to be granted, and God, in his strictness, to answer our prayer, we should find ourselves bitterly paid for our folly. Long-forgotten pangs would start into new being and vigor ; unhappiness, grave and deep, again possess us ; trials, small, but real and vast to childhood, again lash us ; and that which had seemed so fair would be found filled with dust and ashes.

Besides this disappointment, another more pernicious and inevitable evil is, that the craving for the past engenders or increases discontent with the present. The past of childhood presents itself with a halo about it : it is a sort of glorified presence. We look at it much as we do at those pictures of the Saviour so encircled, — as a thing set apart, separate from all else. The common features and lineaments are there, but somehow distinct from all around, — holy and secluded. We have an instinctive reverence for it. The present puts its stark and stern reality by its side. Its iron look of command, its hints of responsibility, its restless appeals, its inflexible law, have a repulsive aspect, as they come up in contrast with this fair phantom ; and we turn longingly to it, dissatisfied that our way of life has fallen into a path so little genial with our desires. There is discontent enough starting out upon us, in our pilgrimage, from other causes, which we do not easily master ; and it were wise to abridge by one the causes so fatal to our peace of mind, so injurious to our integrity.

And there is a yet deeper element of mischief in this discontent. It is a covert dissatisfaction with the position in which God has placed, and the kind of work he has seen fit to put upon the maturer years of life. In looking at earlier days, I find a great charm was their entire freedom from care. We were clothed and fed by others ; and they stood between us and the severer requisitions of existence. Coming into actual life, we encounter, at once, *care*. We find on the threshold that things are vastly changed. The protecting shield is withdrawn. Responsibilities introduce themselves at once. We are on the world's arena ; and on the world's arena is no child's play. It is the shrinking from this reality of life, it is the fear of its demands, that makes us

flee to childhood again ; longing, not only for its trees and friends, the water of its well, but for that spirit in us which knew nothing of life's bitterness. And is this any thing less than recreance to God's demand ? Is it any thing less than fleeing from that front rank in the battle in which he has placed us ? Is it not *fainting* when we should be *pursuing* ; deserting our calling and our manhood ? This struggle of life, would we but see it rightly, is a privilege. A place among the combatants in such a warfare is no mean honor ; to look to the cross, and call it our standard, no slight token of a divine regard. We are held to service, by our descent from God, in a work which he has planned, for the execution of which he has summoned in our energies. We cannot be spared from the post at which a divine will has placed us. Life, capacity, time, are not ours. Therefore, when we turn our backs upon these obligations, and, if we could, would go back to the thoughtless and *careless* days of youth, we are false to our position and our privilege, and deniers of our birthright. We make our love of life to consist only in that which is easy and selfish.

There are other mistakes with regard to the past, — as when we pass out of the limits of our own experience, and speak of the days of our fathers as better than these, calling these degenerate days, and wishing for the “good old times.” This is merely a sentimental falsehood, into which unchastened longings betray us, or a present peevishness impels us. The days that are gone had their virtues ; the days that are have theirs. Neither are perfect ; and to change places would be to put us on the back track of progress. It is well to be reverently affected toward that which made the lives of our fathers, and has entered into the character of ourselves, and has now passed beyond the bourn of a return ; but it is the waste of breath, and folly, to wish for days that have done their work, and made their mark, and passed to their account.

I detect in myself — and suppose, as we advance, it is very natural — a tendency to throw myself back into the past, and to live there. As years go by, things about us become more and more associated with what has gone ; and we cannot well check the crowding multitude of memories that force themselves upon us at every turn. We have no trusty friends standing near to take up the burden of our longings, and break through the

encamped host of days and years and changes, and lay at our feet again that which we crave; but Memory, with silent step, swiftly glides along the deserted avenues of life, and brings back, at our wish, the host that had vanished, re peoples the void, rewarms the heart, and, even in our sadness, cheers us. Let us take her gifts, not for selfish using or for vain repining, but that we may pour them out, as David did, as oblations to the Lord; grateful to him that they have been, and have passed into our lives. In them let us hear a new call to present duty, and from them receive new power for the strife of the future.

The memories that cluster about "the water at the gate," — how inevitably and how largely they affect our lives, and mould our characters! In every day the growing man detects their presence, and feels their influence. No man can wholly outgrow them. They are the infinite and invisible tendrils which bind us to life's beginning; the dawn and prophecy of what we are. Parents ought to realize this, and so fill the earlier years of childhood with that which is pleasant and profitable, that, in the tug or disappointment of life, the memory of home shall be dear and sacred as Bethlehem's water to the sore-pressed king; while those who are still young should be careful to lay by a stock of pleasant memories for their retrospect. And, when those memories come warm and gushing with their joys, or bending wearily beneath their sorrows, let us have no murmurs or repinings, but put ourselves to the present duty, to the stubborn task; remembering that life is present, not past; action, and not memory. Then shall we have only such memories as clustered about "the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate."

J. F. W. W.

A SUNDAY MORNING AT LEBANON.

IN the immediate neighborhood of cities, Sunday morning is, or seems, the brightest in the week. The sky, the grass, and trees, shine in fresher and more vivid coloring. The ocean, with its million waves, glitters back more brightly to the sun, whose light rests like a smile upon the world. In the harbor, hundreds of

vessels, with snowy, swanlike sails, cluster motionless, each quietly watching the reflection of her own lifted wing in the quiet water beneath. All sights are "picture;" and all sounds, music.

But think of Sunday morning among mountains, with the voice of thrush, whippoorwill, bobolink, and mountain-stream, for music; of the hush that dwells, week in and out, in shady places, by deep, quiet rivers, which only at intervals gleam in sight through the thick foliage; of the pure sky, resting upon glorious hilltops, pouring its sunshine, and sending its shadows to chase each other over broad fields of rustling grain!

It is like the land of the patriarchs, this region about Lebanon. Farm stretches beyond farm in the rich level valleys; range rises above range of upland, clothed with the ripening harvest, — now only tender, springing shoots; and now with full, ripe heads, bent in waiting for the reaper, — rye, wheat, oats, barley, maize, and grass. Other fields are populous with fattening herds, — sheep, cows, geese, turkeys, — suggestive of good cheer. Milk, corn, and oil, and honeycomb dropping honey.

The way these mountains lie coiled about each other, and unwind as we drive on, is like enchantment. The great iron arms, that seemed from afar to clasp each other firmly, fall apart as we approach; the rounded summit, above which the sun rises every morning, unfolds and lengthens to a straight, solid, boulder-like mass of rock, as if literally one of the earth's ribs had pushed out, and lay here to astound the pygmies who parade its surface; but the hill, which, from our chamber window at home, was only a dim blue peak, a denser cloud, is so near that we catch the very glistens of its oak-leaves now.

As it creeps higher and higher, the road is very quiet. We meet hardly a traveller, but birds and squirrels in plenty. The boughs are wet with dew, for it is early; and all things look new and fresh, for it rained the day before. The streams, too, are swollen, and seem like living things as they dance foaming over the rocks, wind under the willows, creep into the wood, and, before we have missed them, come laughing out in the sun again.

Our pathway is margined with water on each side, — insignificant streamlets, merest threads of clear, cold water, trilling over their clean, gravel-lined channels, or racing and babbling over

beds of stones. We detect their sources in springs which ooze out, drop by drop, from rocks, or filter through the grass, or trickle from under the gnarled willow-roots; each finding its way to the streams that seem singing so loud to call in recruits, and losing the quiet murmur which it brought from the wood and shadowy willow-roots, and the heart of the hard stone, in that grand hue and cry for more.

Small as these streams are, they reach the ocean at last, — on one side of the mountain through the Housatonic River, on another through the Hudson. The waters accumulate, until, half-way down the mountain, some factory throws a dam across; and then the river widens and grows still, loses its sparkle and voice together, and is like a mirror of brown glass, and still more like a great daguerreotype-plate crowded with half-distinct reflections, — until, at the dam itself, you hold your breath to watch it. Out leaps the mountain-stream again, in showers of glittering, foamy drops. And what a voice comes up amid the spray! such a grand, indignant song against oppression as King David might have thundered forth! and none to listen save the stones and trembling woods. It is Pegasus, leaping from an earthly pound; it is a white butterfly, freeing her wings from the dead, brown chrysalis; it is a soul dead in sin or superstition, shaking the bonds off, calling back its native vigor and purity, and marching on, all the more in earnest for its delay.

The morning of our drive to Lebanon was in July. Whole mountains were covered with blossoming chestnut woods; beech-trees were thickly studded with nuts; and ripe-red raspberries glistened out from amid the roadside grass. Delicate, beautiful ferns clustered about the fences and stone walls; and, above them, snowy elder-blossoms looked out from their dark leaves.

There were multitudes of flowers. The purple milkweed and golden elecampane clustered in marshy ground; field-lilies nodded around the edges of pasture lands; mulleins had perched themselves upon the hillsides; and that royal plant, the Scotch thistle, stood protected by its daggered leaves. White and yellow lilies floated upon the pond; iris and willow-plant grew by the brink; and, in shallow places, clusters of the beautiful arrow-head leaf stood sheltering the rich blue spikes of some other water-plant. Flowers everywhere! The roadside was purpled over with blossoms of the bright little gill-go-over-the-ground; and the delicate lobelia

sent up its blue spires. Whiteweed clustered in snowy drifts; buttercups grew in groves among the grass; and many an acre was red with clover-blossoms. Already a few autumnal flowers were in sight, — St. John's-wort, yarrow, and golden-rod; pale asters too. We miss, by the Housatonic, those beautiful asters which grow so rank and rich in all the Connecticut-River towns, — some tinted as delicately as morning cloud; and some with hues deep and gorgeous as any hyacinth bank in Italy, as any sunset sky at home, could show.

With every new hill we ascended, a new and more enchanting prospect lay below. Again the mountains clasped their arms together about the valley, whose towns, like clusters of white flowers, were scattered through the greenery. We could trace the river by the thick trees shading its bank, and catch here and there the silver glitter of little streams, which net over the landscape, but all of which the motherly Housatonic calls home to her bosom at last.

After an ascent of eight hundred feet, we began to creep down again, and, with the little Hudsonlets this time for company, entered the State of New York.

Sunday morning in a Shaker village! It was still enough to take your breath away: a Puritan Sunday would be turbulent compared with it. The streets and houses seemed to have been swept and dusted an hour before, and were painfully straight and square. Rows of willows shaded the road; rails pricked into their trunks formed its fence; and, beneath them, water was carried in a wooden trough through the whole length of the village. We wondered how it dared to run and drip, and glitter in dripping, and look so temptingly cold and clear in this place, which seemed utterly given up to precision, propriety, and silence.

Two little Shakers crept on tiptoe across the road, and vanished in a house. Their Sunday dress, of handsome cloth, was fashioned like that of our great-grandfathers, and the hair cut Puritan-wise, by a line, with only a few long deacon-looking locks left to wave venerably behind. But for their size, it would not have been difficult to imagine them a couple of apparitions, — genuine Puritan worthies, who had stolen back from their graves, and brought the grave-chill and silence with them. So was all transformed from the sunny joyousness and music of our sabbath among

the hills. Every thing had become sober and commonplace. No more thick boughs, sprinkling dew as the carriage brushed between them ; no wild vines, tangling in luxuriant wreaths and veils over the glorious wood ; no milk-white birch-stems, gleaming out of the shade : only the rows of willows lifted their bushy tops, and, as they waved, displayed the silvery undersides of countless leaves, which met and mingled, and parted again, chiming with a metallic sound like so many silver castanets. Some of the willows had lately been pollarded, translated from shade into gunpowder, and, instead of making the Shaker town more quiet, had gone, perhaps, to make Sevastapol noisier. Their sturdy, venerable trunks were each crowned with a thick green ring of new growth, — a very foolscap, — and reminded one, in their pitiful expression of grandeur and imbecility, of “ poor, despised Lear.” Poplars, which had made a respectable appearance while their neighbors the willows stood at full height, peered up now, pricking the sky, slim as so many steel pens with wooden handles, and even more forlorn than the decapitated trunks.

There came an aromatic odor from the gardens as we passed, — long rows of herbs for drying, or of vegetables gone to seed, each tied to a separate support, or wired into narrow lines. The very onions were braced up so stiff and prim that they seemed turning into Shakers : the round heads, as they stood in rank and file, were already not unlike the sisters’ snowy bonnets.

This people have no regard for beauty : order is beauty to them ; and comfort, fitness. The houses are square and homely, painted in the homeliest shade of red, pink, or orange. The blank end of a barn frequently appears upon the main road. The front yards are ornamented with vinegar-barrels, beehives, and racks of essences, — not scattered, as if left there by accident ; but ranged in rows, and polished, like every thing else in Shakerdom.

There is nothing like the neatness of Shaker villages. Roads, gardens, grainfields, barns, dairies, cellars, bedrooms, kitchens, and churches, are all alike polished with frequent unremitted cleanings. A broom and duster hang beside every door. It does seem as if this aversion to outward uncleanness could not exist with an unclean heart : “ a kingdom divided against itself shall surely

fall ; ” and we know, too, that our painfully acquired virtues soon become involuntary habits.

Suddenly from one of the silent houses filed a procession of men and women, — the former in antique coats and broad-brimmed hats, such as the children had worn ; the latter in straw sun-bonnets, scant white gowns, and high-heeled shoes. They entered the round-roofed church at different doors. The men divested themselves of coats and hats ; and from under the women’s sun-bonnets appeared caps and kerchiefs, snowy and smooth as a shroud. They all moved on tiptoe, and were slim as the poplar-trees outside. The cap concealing their hair was unbecoming, but not as repulsively so as the Sunday expression of countenance which their faces had assumed. Would the All-Beautiful select such grim guardians for his throne ?

It is wonderful, — the way these people divest themselves of their individuality, and of all human expression. You may watch one for an hour, while his face is informed with spiritual life ; but, directly he ceases to speak or listen, he will relapse into a Shaker again ; and you look vainly for him among the rows of drawn-down mouths, low foreheads, and dull eyes. They sing, dance, and most of them listen, with no more life than if the men were so many dead roots of trees, and the women were clusters of Indian-pipe, to which flower they, in their pale attire, large bonnets, and cold, unnatural look, bear a marked resemblance.

At a signal, all arose, with a rustling sound, and sang to an unmelodious tune some words, of which we only caught an occasional refrain : —

“ Beautiful, beautiful, —
The people of the Lord ! ”

or, —

“ Glory be to God this day !
Christ, Christ the Saviour ! ”

Then an elder addressed the people, standing, as did they all, with folded hands. But theirs were passive : he twirled the thumbs of his.

He exhorted them to be sincere and fervent. They had received much, — more light than any people ; peace, comfort,

plenty, tranquil hearts; and much would be required. They must return charity, earnestness, devoutness, and, above all and in all, sincerity. He could sympathize with any man who bowed to any god in sincerity, and believed that heathens who unconsciously worship the true God through their idols were better than such as worship sin in the name of the Holiest. He insisted that the ceremonies upon which they were entering would be only foolishness, if performed mechanically. They must seek to comprehend the meaning of these forms, which, in themselves alone, were worth no more, he said, than dirt. They must forget the earthy and the outward now. Let the spirit rise to its full height, and truth would be revealed to them.

Then, on tiptoe, he advanced from among his brethren, and addressed the world's people, for whom seats had been provided at one side of the church. The world's people had pitied him, and been inclined to smile at the performances thus far; but, as if by clairvoyance, he penetrated to their thoughts, and answered each in a way which secured for him attention and respect. There is no resisting sincerity, manliness, and godliness, though they do shroud themselves in a Shaker frock.

He had a word for us, he said, because we were strangers, and not only walked in the world's ways, but judged by its standards. He spoke because some before him were young and impressible; others thoughtless, and perhaps ill bred. The Shakers had come in peace, as all their doings were, to worship God, not to satisfy vain curiosity, cavil at their neighbor, comment upon his dress, or display their own. Respecting the laws of hospitality, they had admitted us, but asked that we would not pass in and out unnecessarily, slamming the doors as many before us had done, nor stain the floor with tobacco, nor laugh at what we did not understand. His eyes glared and rolled wildly as he alluded to past wrongs; but he backed into the ranks, and became a dead root again.

Then followed a simple but vehement dance among the Shakers, who clapped and shook their hands the while, and sang or hummed a dry, mechanical tune, until, exhausted, they clustered in two squares again, motionless, listening.

A young man advanced; and, although we worldlings, not the faithful, were addressed, he enchained the attention of all.

"You have been fancying," he said, "that you looked upon

the orgies of fanatics. Doubtless you thought us foolish, wild, mad, sordid, stupid, ignorant objects of pity alone. By way of refuting your belief, I will prove that Shakers do the best they know how, and far better than any other sect of so-called Christians. As Christ said to his disciples, rebuking them, I say to you, — 'Ye know not what spirit ye are of;' you willingly forget the wrongs that rankle in the world, and take no pains to realize your own power to diminish, or to increase and aggravate, them. I will quote a remark of one of your own celebrated men, Dr. Channing, — Dr. William Ellery Channing: 'Society needs some radical reform: in the present state, it begets oppression of the poor by the rich, dishonesty in trade, and everywhere rank selfishness.' I will quote from history: 'In the last war with America, England lost two hundred thousand men.' All were Christians, sons and brothers. Think of it, — two hundred thousand corpses, slain in the name of God! It is the same in the present war: French and English and Russians are all Christian men; and the only way they can make peace is by killing each other.

"I will quote from your newspapers what I have recently read: 'In Kansas, a party of Christians met for worship; they belonged to the Methodist Episcopal church North.' Christ divided, you see, to begin, not 'one in him,' but Christ North. 'They were attacked by a band of armed men, and forced to fly for their lives.' Who, think you, were the invaders? Wild sheiks from Arabia? No: only the Methodist Episcopal church South. The trouble is, you rely too much upon lip-service, and obedience to the letter; forgetting that the gospel itself is written in figurative language. Is it wise to esteem the symbol more than the thing symbolized; the shadow mightier than the substance? Shall we worship the Bible, and think nothing of a holy life? Can Christ crucified upon Calvary save us, if we rear no cross in our own hearts?

"Now, you must acknowledge that 'there is something rotten in the state' of your world. We have withdrawn ourselves, hoping to institute a reform. If there be at this hour any community in which more love, union, peace, and plenty exist, than among ourselves, we will gladly learn from them. We work for each other, and for God. There are no favored classes among us; no rich and poor. We eat, drink, and are clad alike.

You saw, as you drove hither, broad farms, — land teeming with wealth. There is no mine and thine about it; it's all *ours*. And there is among us no sex which monopolizes rights. 'There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for we are all one in Christ.'

"Laugh, if you will, at Shakerism, with its grotesque apparel, the simple and rude behavior of its followers: what may seem to you a result of ignorance or accident has for us a deep significance. Only anointed eyes can read the inscriptions whereby we have hallowed all: yea, on the meanest utensils in our houses, and on the very horses' harnesses, we have written, as did the Lord's people in old times, 'Kedesh, holy to the Lord!'

"Joshua chose cities of refuge for the Jews. Some of their names were: Ramoth, high places; Ephraim, fruitful; Kirjath-arba, the city of four, — that is, of squares, of order and justice; Golan, passage, revolution; and Kedesh, holy. 'And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers.'

"Such cities we have aimed to build. Does not the world need a refuge from its wars, oppressions, and crimes? Does not the church need a refuge from its creeds assumed as cloaks for sin; its eternal sounding of Christ's name, and ignoring of his spirit? We have chosen high places and fruitful ones; have made each a 'city of squares.' Where line and plummet regulate all, there can be no dispute. We have inscribed upon every thing, 'Kedesh, holy;' and the Lord has given us rest round about, according to all that he swore unto our fathers."

He described the ideal of his church, — a saintly life on earth, — and, turning to his people, assured them that even here it might be fully realized by them. Christ himself was but a Jew; and it was only after a life of labor and prayer, that, as he was baptized in Jordan, the spirit descended upon him in its fulness, and he became God. Christ and his twelve apostles (he must have forgotten "Peter's wife's mother") led a life of celibacy. This was proof enough against the institution of marriage, without the testimony of Mother Anne.

Christ atoned for the sin of Adam; but common sense would teach that woman also needed a regenerator. She came in the founder of their sect, upon whom the spirit of God descended, and filled her with prophecy. From her influence all the recent

movements in woman's favor have proceeded, and that intellectual impulse, which, as in the case of Mrs. Stowe, has made her name ring around the world.

He hoped we would all think of these things, and go home resolved to work a little less for our own selfish necessities, and more for the good of all, as a result of our morning at the Shaker church.

K. C.

BETHEL.

ALL day, beneath the burning heat
Of a fierce tropic sky,
With weary limbs and blistering feet,
Young Jacob held his way.

Behind, he feared the withering blight
Of Esau's kindled wrath ;
Before, no hope threw in its light
To cheer his lonely path.

And now 'tis night ; yet still he sees
Nought but a waste around :
He prays beneath the open skies,
And sleeps on holy ground.

Sweet visions bless his humble couch ;
The angels come and go ;
He feels the rare ethereal touch
That wakes the prophet's glow.

He sees fulfilled the waiting hope
Of ages since the flood,
And Mercy's ladder reaching up
Quite to the throne of God.

To him no more his path appears
A thorny wild untrod ;
But every step the signet bears
Of a protecting God.

With joy his loins again he binds,
 And slights his present pains,
 Till flocks and herds and home he finds
 In Padan-Aram's plains.

When thou, O God ! shalt hedge my way
 With prospects wild and drear,
 Send me some token from on high
 To feel thy presence near.

Then Faith the oil of joy shall pour
 On Trial's stony bed,
 And build her Bethel where before
 A wilderness was spread.

E. N. N.

 CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY.

IN looking around upon many of our churches at the present time, a strange anomaly presents itself to the observant eye, — one which cannot be read aright without prompting the question, What is the true and legitimate cause of this state of things, and where lies the remedy ? By the very establishment of these churches, and the supply, more or less adequate, of the means of public worship ; by the well-filled pews during the *morning* service ; by the anxiety often manifested to obtain a talented or popular preacher, — a tacit inference might well be drawn, that the great truths of the spiritual life were regarded as of paramount importance ; that all who met together from week to week, for worship and instruction, were impressed, in some good measure, with the solemn realities of life, and the desire to aid one another in their heavenward progress. We should expect to find a good degree of mutual interest, forbearance, and love, — a spiritual sympathy, — prompting the occasional assembling of those one in purpose and aim, to supplicate the help, guidance, and blessing of the Spirit ; the mutual aid imparted, and the hand of cordial fellowship extended, to those just entering upon the religious life.

Looking back to the earliest days of the church, and pondering those wonderful narratives of its first apostles and preachers, — when thousands were converted in a single day; when the simple acknowledgment of Christ as the chosen Master and Redeemer of the soul became the bond of a true and living fellowship, over-leaping at once all artificial barriers of nation, clime, or language, — it requires no keen discernment to perceive that a portion at least of their success is to be attributed to the spirit of mutual interest and of Christian sympathy, by which each individual, however humble his capacity or limited his sphere, felt himself to be, in truth, a member of that ever-living body of which Christ alone is the Head. They were fellow-pilgrims bound on the same journey, seeking the same goal, trusting to participate in the same immortal inheritance. Looking beyond the vain distinctions and fading glitter of the outward world, they bowed together at the foot of the cross; and, blending together their aspirations and desires, their confessions and thanksgivings, they felt that they were indeed one in Christ Jesus.

Turning, now, to the actual state of things in many churches of our denomination, we are at once impressed with the absence of this spirit of mutual sympathy and a common interest. Recognizing one another as seekers after the same glorious goal, as competitors for the same prize, merely in the established routine of the Sabbath service; seldom speaking of the highest hopes and aspirations, the fears and longings, that at times fill every soul; never meeting, at any special season, to supplicate the peculiar guidance and blessing of the Spirit, — what wonder that so many of the young regard the whole subject of religion with indifference, or that some seek in other quarters the hand of Christian fellowship and the sympathy of Christian love? What wonder that some in maturer life, whose views of truth differ in a measure from those with whom they are daily associated, or who believe that much of truth and earnestness are to be found in other denominations than our own, having less strong mere denominational attachments than many, long for a higher development of Christian faith and zeal, for a more genial love, and a warmer sympathy and charity?

We sometimes hear the regret expressed, that so few of the young feel any distinct obligation to observe the simple ordinances of our faith; but, apart from all higher considerations, is not the

evil in some measure attributable to the spirit that pervades many quarters of the church itself, — to the spirit of coldness, indifference, and self-satisfied isolation, that characterizes so many of its members ?

Let a young person, full of quick and ardent feeling, with a kind and gentle sympathy, but, perchance, unattractive in exterior or diffident in manner, make known his desire to his pastor, in outward form, to unite himself with the church of Christ, and how is he too often received ? The pastor expresses his kind and affectionate interest, and gives him the warm and cordial welcome ; but this is all. Often no hand of Christian fellowship is extended to him, no word of welcome uttered, recognizing him as a member of the household of faith ; and month after month he sits at his Master's table, and returns home, rejoicing, indeed, in his communion with his Saviour, but with a sense of isolation, a feeling that the glad sympathies of his nature are not satisfied.

Not long since, upon returning from church, we joined a young friend, and, after speaking of the impressive services, inquired why her brother's seat had been so long vacant. "Oh !" she replied, "he has left our society, to attend the church in — Street ; for he says he finds there so much more cordiality, sympathy, and zeal, that he no longer feels as if an isolated being."

The state of feeling implied in this remark we could easily understand ; for, truly as we may consider religion as a *personal* concern, — and none can regard it as more so than ourselves, — there are cravings of the spirit which need to be satisfied through a free, earnest, spiritual communion with other souls.

We call ourselves immortal ; and yet we live as if this life were all. We say that we believe in Christ ; but how seldom does the utterance of a devoted love, even in the sanctuary of the home-circle, attest the faith of the soul ! We profess our faith in God the Father, our dependence upon the Spirit for guidance and help ; but how rarely are these relations acknowledged, save in the hour of trial and bereavement, or in the critical discussion or controversy !

We know there are glad exceptions, and at times we have felt their blessedness ; but never will our churches become true and living branches of the one true Vine until they are pervaded by a warmer zeal and a tenderer sympathy. It is not enough that we fill alone our own little cups at the fountain of life, unmind-

ful of the thirsting souls around us ; Sabbath after Sabbath worshipping even in the same sanctuary. Nay, we *cannot* fill them unless we seek also to *diffuse* the waters of salvation.

A selfish Christian ! a self-satisfied Christian ! a cold, isolated Christian ! Are not these terms an evident contradiction, bearing their own signet of spiritual death ? And yet how many are there in our churches who respect its ordinances, and call themselves by their Master's name, but who feel that they are all-sufficient to themselves, and that others have no right to expect any personal sympathy, encouragement, or aid from them ; forgetting the young, the tried, the tempted, all around them ; forgetting Him who, in the fulness of divine compassion, came as a personal Saviour to the humblest soul !

Turn to the early and noble preachers of our faith ; and how can we associate the spirit of self-satisfied complacency, of decent outward conformity, of an isolated faith, with the glowing zeal and tender sympathy of Paul, or the tender love and gentle compassion of John ? Was it such a spirit as now characterizes many of our churches that broke the bonds of pagan superstition ; that awoke, from sea-girt isle and rocky shore, from desert lands and snow-crowned mountains, the cry for a living faith and an undying hope ? Did no warmer spirit of Christian love pervade the devoted hearts assembled in the catacombs of the imperial city, in hidden caves and rocky fastnesses, — their only refuge from bitter tyranny and oppression ? Did no more fervent, tender, personal sympathy breathe through the loving heart of Fénelon, or in the devoted zeal and tender compassion of Cheverus ?

We want earnestness and life, a spirit of personal sympathy and interest, if we would make any true aggression upon the strongholds of sin and evil in our very midst, — if we would enlarge our own borders, or extend the spirit of free, personal inquiry, or win others to Christ through his own spirit of holy love and tender sympathy. Yet more : we need such a spirit, if we would have our churches themselves *living* churches. Coldness, apathy, an unsympathizing spirit, are the sure forerunners of spiritual death in the church as in the individual. The very essence of its life is love, — love, free, open, boundless as that of the Father ; a love that is self-forgetful, ever ready to bestow the needed help, to proffer the kindly counsel ; to enter, with a loving

sympathy, into the struggles, trials, and aspirations of other souls; a love that sometimes seeks communion with kindred spirits upon the higher themes of thought and spiritual progress.

Wherever we find this Christ-like spirit the most widely diffused; wherever we find the most cordial Christian fellowship and the most active zeal; wherever we find the tenderest mutual sympathy, forbearing love, and gentle compassion; wherever we find the strongest desire in fellow-Christians to aid one another in the attainment of the highest life of the soul, — there shall we recognize the truest “church of the Saviour,” that which alone deserves to bear the name of its divine Master and Head.

H. M.

THE DYING GIRL TO HER MOTHER.

COME, sweet mother! closer, closer
Clasp to you your dying one;
Let your dear face be the last one
These dimmed eyes shall look upon —

Ere the angel-faces greet me,
That no sweeter are, I ween,
Than your face, O mother darling!
Clear, soft eyes, and brow serene.

Here I lie, where first you held me,
When I drew life's first, free breath;
Now I lie here, faint and weary,
Waiting for its ending, — death.

And the warm tears you are weeping
Sink into my inmost heart;
And I tremblingly cling closer,
Dreading death, because I part —

From a love that knew no changing
In its prayerful tenderness;
From a love that ever gently
Turned to me, to chide or bless.

Take my hands in yours, dear mother !
 Fix your clear, soft eyes on mine, —
 That my spirit gather courage
 From your fortitude divine ; —

That, unshrinking, fearless, trusting
 In our God's omnipotence,
 With thy love and prayers to aid me,
 I may hopefully go hence.

Nearer, nearer ! clasp me closer !
 For your face is fading fast :
 But the mortal strife and anguish
 Of this dreaded hour are past ; —

For a vision, past all glory
 That to earth was ever given,
 Leads my death-released spirit
 To the happiness of heaven.

Hushed the voice, and stilled the heart-throb ;
 But a mourner kneeleth there,
 With a face of ashen whiteness,
 In an agony of prayer.

A. F.

A LETTER.

MY DEAR L., — Since I last wrote you, spring has ripened into summer ; and summer is now declining into autumn. Already the face of Nature begins to wear that sweet "matron grace," which, though not causing the heart to bound like the glad freshness of spring, awakens a quiet happiness, more in unison with the feelings of those wayfarers who have trodden the paths of life long enough to know that human experience is not all frolic and sunshine. The golden-rod has begun to wave in the fields ; and the cool mornings and evenings, and many sights and sounds, remind us that the reign of Summer is ended. There is a chastened repose about this autumnal weather that is almost holy, and seems to dispose the mind for serious contemplation

and high communion. The law written on all around us, that "the things seen are temporal" and transitory, reminds us also that "the things unseen are eternal," — are *the realities*.

This season might seem the most appropriate ~~one~~ for passing away from earth. There appears to be a peculiar fitness in the falling of the mortal frame into the bosom of the earth with the falling leaf. Yet perhaps there is a still greater adaptation in the spring-time, when the new birth of the visible creation typifies the far more glorious birth of the newly ascended spirit, and, in its goodly promise, speaks of that which shall be, rather than of the past. Certainly, to the mourning hearts of those who have laid a loved form beneath the turf, there is a sweet solace in seeing Nature bringing from day to day fresh treasures from her wealth of beauty to decorate the sacred spot.

Even "the shadow of a great affliction" should not render the heart insensible to these gentle graces of the world around us, though its pulses cannot bound joyously, as in happier times, and all things may seem chastened into harmony with its own sadness. My thoughts still revert to an object which impressed itself on my memory in some of the early, beautiful spring-days. It was nothing more patrician than a common apple-tree, but so peculiarly rich in the deep tinge of its many buds and blossoms, that never, among the choicest exotics, have I seen it surpassed in beauty. It has fixed its image deeply, and I believe indelibly, in my mind, recalling the words of the poet, —

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever."

I did not think, as day after day I stood or knelt admiringly, and almost reverently, under its branches, that I was treasuring up memories which would be within me, as it were, "a well of water, springing up into" visions of beauty through the whole season, and I know not for what length of time yet to come. It was only of the present blessing that I thought, regretting that it must so soon pass away; but there was superadded another, which bids fair to abide long after the flower has given place to fruit, and blossom, leaf, and fruit, have fallen, and left the tree in the desolation of winter, — yes, perhaps for ages after the parent-tree has ceased to be. So permanent may those influences be which seem at first of little moment, and proceed from an insignificant source. Is it not an encouragement to work in our

own sphere, however humble, when we see that even an inanimate thing, perfectly fulfilling its mission, may have power to affect and bless the heart of man? If our ability be small, shall we not the more diligently use the little, the one talent, that is given, or that is still spared from the wreck of more vigorous years, — dropping here the little deed of kindness, there the word of friendly counsel, encouragement, or sympathy, or, if nothing more, the look of love; trusting in God to bless the harvest that may spring from these small seeds sown? Let us praise him that even the cup of cold water, given in the spirit of Christ, is an offering acceptable in his sight. How comforting is this assurance to those who have little to give but the benedictions of a loving heart! Oh! could we always realize the blessing unfolded in the ability to perform even the slightest act of love, how rich might our lives become! Let us seek to *be* such, my friend, that the spontaneous overflowing of our inner life shall be at least into rills of kindness, which shall make glad the small domain of home.

Yours,

M. W.

EDITOR'S COLLECTANEA.

The Christian Life, Social and Individual. By PETER BAYNE, M.A. Gould and Lincoln. — This work, to which particular attention has been attracted, and which certainly has unusual claims to consideration, is a popular defence of the evangelical system against the precise forms of scepticism which are most according to the genius of these times. The three chief doubters resisted are Fichte, Comte, and Carlyle; the author being evidently more familiar with the two latter than the former. There is nothing narrow or ecclesiastical in Mr. Bayne's method; indeed, his work can hardly be called scientific. With very little formal, theological discussion, but with a great deal of practical force, skill in expression, and vigor of mental activity, he meets the pantheist, and the mere ethical reformer, on their own ground; and shows himself, with his sling and his pebbles of Christian truth from the brook that flows "fast by the oracles of God," no mean contender against

master-minds in unbelief. A large part of the volume is taken up with sketches of the life and work of eminent believers of modern times who have illustrated the power of the gospel in the brave and busy services of the church, society, letters, and the state, and have proved its harmony with all the noblest impulses and strongest enterprises of humanity. These chapters exhibit the author as quite a brilliant essayist, and not without promise of marked attainments in philosophy. Without pretending to join in all his admirations, or to indorse all his incidental criticisms, or to pronounce him a perfectly mature thinker, such as can solve the profoundest class of difficulties, we can heartily say that he states with clearness and energy the true points of the great controversy, takes what seems to us the right side, and holds it manfully. It is a book to stir the enthusiasm of young readers especially.

Beginning and Growth of the Christian Life ; or, The Sunday-school Teacher. Crosby, Nichols, and Co. — Did we know any very special form of words that would be sure to gain the attention and favor of every reader of these pages to a book, we should certainly wish to use it here. For, by the absolute and permanent truths it utters ; by its direct adaptation to tendencies and wants of our own immediate age and people ; by its manner, at once uncompromising and catholic, of dealing with the phases of religious belief and unbelief ; by its evangelical unction ; by its insight into spiritual experience ; and by its simple and intelligible style, — it appears to us capable of doing incalculable good in the class it particularly addresses, and among all inquiring, thoughtful, awakened hearts. Without entering into philosophical difficulties, or meeting speculative scepticism speculatively, or professing to enlighten mature souls, it handles the great practical religious questions that assail the popular mind in the most effectual way. It is a book for parents to give their children just leaving home, or staying at home ; for ministers to put into the hands of their parishioners ; for young persons to obtain who are seeking to live the true life "hid with Christ in God ;" and for every Sunday-school teacher to take as a chart and an inspiration. Whenever the Sunday school is conformed, in spirit and action, to its noble standard, then that institution will rise to its proper dignity, achieve its true victories, and be clothed in the power and beauty and glory of a blessed nursery for the church of Christ.

Discipline of Sorrow. American Unitarian Association. — Four tender, true, touching discourses, addressed to the disciples of suffering, full of Christian comforting, balm, and hope, by one

whose whole experience and character eminently qualify him to be a "son of consolation," — Rev. W. G. ELIOT, D.D., of St. Louis.

Alfred Tennyson's Maud, and other Poems. Ticknor and Fields. — If, with his great and original powers of invention, his skill in versification, and his poetic eye, Tennyson were as free from all mannerism and conceit as Bryant is, he would stand out alone as the poet of his age. This little volume is full of his brilliancies and his blemishes. Even the remarkable genius of such a poet-laureate cannot make the present war of England with Russia respectable.

A Visit to the Camp before Sevastopol. By R. C. McCORMICK, jun. D. Appleton and Co. — One of the incidental and deplorable results of the Crimean campaign is an increase of war-literature, and a consequent mischief to the tastes and opinions of young readers. The result is inevitable; and we ought to rejoice, perhaps, when, as in the case before us, the author shows no bloody propensities in himself. Of the various works called forth by the protracted siege, and giving valuable information respecting the localities and the forces, our countryman's is one of the best. The lively, graphic style, and the maps, give a very full picture of the state of affairs. But we so much prefer the associations of industry to those of destruction, that, if we bore the name of McCormick, we would rather it should go down to the future connected with the peaceful triumph of a reaping-machine, than with the cruelties of the camp, and the clash of hostile arms.

Cleve Hall. By Miss SEWELL. D. Appleton and Co. — Few female writers, on the whole, have earned a purer or more honorable fame than Miss Sewell. Her fictions all bear the stamp of a spirit in habitual communion with God, a good heart, and excellent talents. She has made hosts of friends wherever the English language is read, whom she will never see face to face till the general meeting in the resurrection of the just. Like her other stories, "Cleve Hall" is genial, agreeable, wholesome reading.

Oakfield. By W. D. ARNOLD, Lieut. 58th Regiment B.N.S. Ticknor and Fields. — It is pleasant to find the son of an intellectual man, whom we have all regarded with veneration and gratitude, earning success in the world of letters. "Oakfield" is something more than a good story. Throughout, it is taken for granted that a military life is an accepted and just calling for a Christian patriot. If this is true, — as the world hitherto agrees it is, though we find it very hard to believe that sentiment will remain when Christianity has gained its full victory, — then

it is legitimate for a Christian author to occupy his pages with details of army-engagements, and the records of battles. Mr. Arnold's narrative is spirited and interesting. The account of Vernon's deathbed, being totally free from every trace of cant or pietistic whine, is as genuine a specimen of manly religious composition as we can remember.

Cora and the Doctor; or, Revelations of a Physician's Wife. J. P. Jewett and Co. — It is well, perhaps, that the other professions are taking their turn, in having their trials, crosses, and details shown to the public, and turned to literary profit. The work before us seems to aim at doing for doctors something like what the "Sunny" and "Shady" books have undertaken to do for the clergy; and, in the scale of merit, it belongs in the same general rank. It is well-intentioned, humane, sympathetic, sometimes amusing, and calculated to entertain a large class of persons.

De Quincey's Note-Book. Ticknor and Fields. — The reverential tone of Mr. De Quincey's mind gives to all his writings, even those on secular and playful subjects, a certain religious impression. The largeness of his scholarship, the august majesty of his conceptions, his keen sense of the brooding mystery of life and thought, his marvellous style, — a style that *must* be admired, but ought never to be imitated, — and his singular power of expanding small themes into great relations, place him in the front rank of the select writers of the age. We always take the presence of his works in a library as the sign of a good intellectual taste. The present volume is mostly occupied with critical papers. The article on "Three Memorable Murders" is a great falling off from "Murder as a Fine Art;" but it has the author's striking peculiarities.

Roget's Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases. Gould and Lincoln. — The first edition of this elaborate work was noticed by us with approval. The second deserves a still more emphatic commendation, as embracing many additions and corrections. Purchasers should be careful to inquire for the new edition. Whatever may be said of word-books in comparison with books of ideas, we believe that both the style and the thought of those that write for the public would be richer and clearer for the study of treatises like this. Dr. Sears, President of Brown University, is the American editor; and this edition has been prepared under the particular charge of Prof. J. L. Lincoln, of the same institution.

Words for Workers. Crosby, Nichols, and Co. — Rev. W. D. Haley, one of the best "workers," and most earnest speakers of

"words," among the Western ministers, has here thrown together half a dozen animated, practical lectures to young men, on some of their most familiar duties, responsibilities, and exposures. Such direct and manly counsel can hardly fail of a candid acceptance and a useful result.

Various pamphlets have been accumulating on our table the last two months, some of the most noticeable of which are the following: —

Dr. Lunt's able and devout plea for "*The Province and Functions of Faith*," which won such universal praise, by its scholarship and its gospel soundness, when delivered as a Dudleian lecture at Cambridge; Bishop Clark's "*Charge to the Episcopal Clergy of the Rhode Island Diocese*," which has a sound so stirring that it becomes a hopeful signal for the whole denomination from which it proceeds, and proves that a bishop may be a whole-souled man, a sympathizer with the actual wants of the day, a working, hearty, Christian brother and gentleman, and no ceremonial manipulator among rites and vestments; Dr. Eliot's beautiful and encouraging vindication of the preacher's office before the Alumni of the Cambridge Theological School, — every word of which has in it the weight of a consistent life, and every position the support of a thorough practice, — a discourse we should be glad to have preached to every class in every college of the land; Rev. Woodbury M. Fernald's "*Renunciation of the Error of Universalism*," — the plain and dignified statement of a sincere, thinking man's progress out of an unsatisfying doctrine into the bosom of the Swedenborgian Church; the "*Seventeenth Annual Report of the Female Moral Reform Society*," — a modest record of faithful and useful labors in one of the most needed and most blessed of all charities; "*Discourses and Speeches at the Semi-centennial Celebration of Monson Academy*," including an eloquent address on "Commerce and Literature," by Rev. Dr. Storrs, of Brooklyn; and the "*Address on a System of Christian Theology*," by Prof. H. B. Smith, at his inauguration as Professor of Theology in the Union Theological Seminary at New York, — learned, religious, and catholic.

We have also received several numbers of three different periodicals, published in Boston as organs of the New Church, — a weekly newspaper, a monthly magazine, and a magazine for children, — each admirably adapted to its purpose, all characterized by a liberal, pure, and devotional spirit.